

Israeli soldiers dump injured Palestinian outside Jericho

JERICHO (AFP) — Palestinian security officials protested Saturday against Israeli soldiers who dumped an injured Palestinian on a road outside Jericho after treating him for gunshot wounds inflicted by Israeli troops last week.

Arafat Mahmoud Said Al Kaud, 38, was shot and seriously injured in the chest and stomach a week ago by an Israeli patrol which found him near the Jordan border outside the Palestinian-run enclave of Jericho.

Mr. Kaud, a native of the West Bank town of Hebron, told AFP he was released on Thursday, when Israeli officers took him from his hospital room in Jerusalem and

drove him to an intersection outside Jericho.

"They just dumped me on the road. It was night and I didn't know where I was. I had to ask at a nearby gas station where I was," said Mr. Kaud from his bed in Jericho hospital.

Palestinian security officials protested at Mr. Kaud's treatment, saying Israeli soldiers "treated him like a dog."

The office of the Palestinian liaison with the Israeli army "was only a kilometre away from where they dumped him. They could have had the decency to contact us and hand him over directly to us," said one official, who asked not to be named.



SCUFFLE IN BAGHDAD: Palestinians attending a conference in support of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in Baghdad scuffle Saturday. The brawl between pro- and anti-Arafat factions started during an address by a pro-Arafat Palestinian to about 500 Iraqi and Arab workers (AP photo)

Iranian papers criticise U.S. report accusing Iran of terrorism

TEHRAN (AP) — Iranian newspapers on Saturday rejected a U.S. report that accuses Iran of terrorism, saying the "totally baseless" allegation would only widen the gap between the two nations.

The U.S. State Department's annual report on terrorism, issued Thursday, listed Iran as the world's "most active" sponsor of terrorism.

The government-run Tehran Times responded in an editorial: "Instead of resorting to a misinformation campaign against Iran, Washington had better concentrate on exploring avenues as how to improve bilateral ties."

"Though the report is totally baseless, it was not unexpected," the English-language newspaper said.

Iran News and other newspapers also published similar comments.

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami took the first step toward improving ties with the United States in January, when he called for cultural exchanges. The United States severed ties with Iran soon after the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled the U.S.-backed shah. Since then Washington has regularly accused Tehran of sponsoring terrorism.

A diplomat at Iran's U.N. mission in New York said there was no "valid evidence" for the allegations, which he said had "added another brick to the wall of mistrust between the two countries," the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

The U.S. report said Tehran conducted at least 13 assassinations in 1997, the majority in northern Iraq.

The report said Iran's targets normally include, but are not limited to, members of the regime's main opposition groups, including the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran and the Mujahideen Khalq Organisation (MKO).

Tehran Times defended Iran's attacks on the Mujahideen Khalq.

"Given the terrorist nature of the MKO, it is quite natural for Iran to attack its military bases inside Iraqi territory," the newspaper said.

Israeli terminal at Rafah border crossing ravaged by electrical fire

RAFAH (AFP) — A fire, apparently caused by a short circuit, ravaged the Israeli sector of the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip overnight, Israeli and Palestinian officials said Saturday.

An Israeli army spokesman told AFP Palestinian and Israeli firefighters had joined in putting out the blaze, but he could not specify the cause of the fire or the extent of the damages.

Palestinian security officials, who have their own terminal at the crossing, said the

blaze destroyed a computer room, part of the waiting hall used by travellers and an Israeli police post.

One Palestinian fireman was hurt as they tried to put out the flames, said a Palestinian official.

Israeli firemen had to rush to the site from the south Israeli town of Ashkelon, nearly an hour away, and arrived to find the blaze mostly extinguished and the terminal charred and destroyed, he said.

The Palestinian part of the terminal was spared except

for a small room for employees which was slightly damaged.

The Rafah terminal, under overall Israeli control according to self-rule agreements, is divided into two sections, one for Israelis crossing from Egypt into the country.

The other side, for Palestinians entering the self-rule area of the Gaza Strip, is run by Palestinian officials but Israeli security has a presence to monitor baggage and passports.

Traffic through the Israeli side was halted by the blaze.

Iraq newspaper says Russian, Chinese oil deals should go to U.S.

BAGHDAD (R) — An Iraqi newspaper said on Saturday that oil contracts signed with Russian and Chinese companies should instead go to U.S. firms, which can pressure President Bill Clinton to end U.N. sanctions on Iraq.

Iraqi newspapers said that Russia, China and France, which have traditionally had lucrative trade ties with Iraq, had done little to prevent the U.N. Security Council from prolonging the sanctions on Monday.

The weekly newspaper Al Mustaqbal (The Future), owned by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, called on the Iraqi government to cancel oil contracts signed last year with Russian and Chinese companies and grant them to American firms.

"We should cancel contracts, which in fact have not been implemented yet, with Russia and China and suspend talks with the French to sign new contracts and start negotiations with those who can twist [U.S. President Bill] Clinton's neck," the paper said in reference to U.S. oil firms.

Another paper owned by Uday, Babel, echoed the same theme in a front-page editorial.

"Promises of some of the big [superpowers] that they would work for the implementation of paragraph 22 [lifting embargo on Iraq's oil export] were absent during the recent meeting of the Security Council," it said.

Babel, Iraq's most influential newspaper, said some member states of the council had not called for lifting the sanctions for the fear that it would be

vetoed by the United States.

Iraq last year signed contracts with Russian and Chinese firms to help develop large oil fields in southern Iraq. Baghdad has also been negotiating with two French firms to develop two oil fields in the south.

Implementation of these contracts would not start until the sanctions imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait were lifted.

Al Mustaqbal said: "The recent review of the sanctions imposed on Iraq for more than seven years has proved that France, Russia and China are unable to do anything to break the embargo."

"We should wash our hands from the idea that these three big powers... can help us to break the embargo," it added.

Turkish police arrest 11 far-left militants following May Day riot

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish police detained 11 suspected far-left militants on Saturday after clashes between leftists and riot police at a May Day rally.

Anadolu News Agency said police rounded up the suspects in the western city of Bursa. They are accused of links to the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C).

urban guerrilla group.

The agency quoted Bursa assistant police chief Bulent Eliazik as saying the group had recently sent a leader to the city from near Istanbul to organise a guerrilla network.

Police wielding batons clashed with far-left militants at a large May Day rally in central Istanbul on Friday. Dozens of demon-

strators were hurt, most of them beaten by police, and more than 100 were detained.

The DHKP-C is the largest of Turkey's many extreme-left factions. It was accused of rocket attacks on police buildings in Istanbul last year. The group shot dead industrialist Ozdemir Sahanci in 1996.

Moustache hairy issue in Turkish campaign against Islamists

By Susanne Gusten
Agence France Presse

ISTANBUL — Istanbul barber Hasim Ozkurt explains why most Turks wear a moustache. "It's the Turkish way," he says.

But as the Turkish state steps up its campaign against the Islamist movement, even this most quintessential symbol of Turkishness is not left untouched.

A recent directive to civil

servants, aimed at tightening the strictly secular dress code, specifies the exact length and shape of the politically correct moustache, which must be clipped straight and end above the upper lip.

This is tantamount to a curtailment of freedom of expression in a country where political and religious beliefs are often expressed in terms of facial hair.

"You can easily identify a man by his moustache," Mr.

Ozkurt said, pausing for a moment with scissors in hand in his small shop in Istanbul's conservative... Fatih... district, above the Golden Horn.

His customers, lazier up for a shave or waiting their turn over a cup of tea, joined him in enumerating the various styles and their significance.

A full moustache with pronounced, down-turned ends at the corner of the mouth denotes a rightist nationalist,

everyone agreed.

A smallish brush moustache, on the other hand, in the style popularised by the former leader of the banned Islamist... Welfare... Party, Necmettin Erbakan, shows the wearer to be a follower of political Islamism.

And a long moustache that hangs over the upper lip and touches the lower, is the sign of an old-fashioned leftist.

Most young men in Turkey begin to grow a moustache as soon as they possibly can, said 29-year-old Hancil Bolat, himself a barber by profession, stopping by his colleague's place for a chat.

His moustache is of the basic kind, neither short nor long and neither up-turned nor down-turned, that carries no message but that its bearer is Turkish.

But moustaches can also express a preference for a certain life-style, Mr. Ozkurt explained.

A moustache shaped like two airplane wings that just barely touch in the middle is called an "Istanbul-style" moustache and advertises the wearer to be an urban dweller. And a long moustache with twisted ends is called an Ottoman moustache and is a sign of nostalgia.

But when it comes to strong religious beliefs, a moustache is often not enough.

"A true Muslim must have a full beard," Mr. Ozkurt said.

A haji who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca will wear his beard long in front and combed out in the shape of a half-moon.

Younger faithful wear their full beards a bit shorter and pointier, taking pains to keep the outline sharp and precise by shaving off stray hairs above and below the hairline.

These beards have become a bone of contention between the state and the Islamist movement.

Referendum begins on controversial new Sudan constitution

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudanese voters were heading to the polls this weekend at the start of a referendum on a new constitution causing controversy because of its ambiguity on the rights of political parties.

The draft document permits the setting up of parties, outlawed after the leader of the ruling junta Omar al-Bashir seized power in 1989. But its terms are vague and the text provides only limited freedoms to form associations.

Major General Al Khair Abdul Jalil Al Musherruf, deputy chairman of the electoral commission, told AFP that

voters began turning up Friday at polling centres in the Gezira, Kassala, Gedaref and Red Sea states.

The commission was awaiting reports from other states except Khartoum, where polling is set to begin next Saturday.

The new constitution for Sudan, Africa's largest country in terms of area, has also sparked disputes, because it stipulates that strict Islamic law, Sharia, as well as traditional practice, should form the basis of all legislation.

Sudan has been gripped for 15 years

by civil war between rebels seeking to end Islamist domination of the mainly animist and Christian south of the country by the Arabised north.

Key elements of the northern political opposition to Bashir's Islamist-backed junta, which toppled an elected civilian government, have joined forces with the mainstream southern rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), seeking to oust the regime.

Some southern rebel chiefs have rallied to the junta and signed a peace pact with it last year, but in recent weeks

battles have been sparked by changes of stance by such leaders, jockeying for position in a power-sharing contest.

The official newspaper Al Anbaa quoted an election official in Gezira state as saying the referendum turnout was poor on the first day, attributing this to "the poor media enlightenment campaign" that preceded the voting process.

The official Hashim Khatib, was also quoted as saying the authorities would double efforts in coming days to reach the 85 per cent polling target by the end of voting on May 20.

Ambassador Abdul Monim Mebrouk of the electoral technical committee in charge of the referendum for Sudanese nationals abroad said voting would occur at Sudanese embassies from May 14 to 25.

Al Anbaa newspaper said the final Khartoum state voter registers were made public Friday in preparation for a poll between May 9 and 19.

A total of 810 polling stations has been set up nationwide, and the result is expected to be announced in the last week of May.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

- 15:10 Cartoon — Pumpkin Patch
- 15:20 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
- 15:30 — Skippy
- 16:00 The American Chart Show
- 17:00 — In The Wild
- 18:00 — French Programme
- 19:00 — Le Journal
- 19:15 — French Programme
- 19:30 — News Headlines
- 19:35 Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
- 20:00 Documentary — The People and Places of Africa
- 20:30 Talk Show — Challenges
- 21:10 — Drama — Renegade
- 22:00 — News in English
- 22:30 — Drama — Silent Witness
- 23:59 — End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

- 14:18 — Fajr
- 15:44 — Sunrise/Duha
- 2:32 — Dhuhur
- 6:12 — Asr
- 9:21 — Maghrib
- 10:47 — Isha

CHURCHES

- t. Mary of Nazareth Church weifich, Tel. 5920740
- Assemblies of God Church Tel. 532785
- Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
- Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

- 4622366 Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811
- St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
- Amman International Church Tel. 865897
- German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
- The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
- St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
- Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
- Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
- Church of Presentation, Sweifich Tel. 5920146
- The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
- The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
- Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679
- The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
- The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
- The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

- A hot wave will affect the Kingdom today and last for three days causing temperatures to be 7-9 degrees centigrade above average. It will be hot, dry, and winds westerly moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate, and seas calm.
- Min/Max. temp. 16/33
- Amman 20/40
- Deserts 14/25
- Jordan Valley 19/39
- Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 31, Amman 38 Humidity readings: Amman (4 per cent, Amman 18 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NIGHT DUTY

- AMMAN: Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh 4126011
- Dr. Tawfiq Qubain 4622029
- Dr. Khalid Asfour 5332600
- Dr. Awni Hawamdeh 5332320
- Firas pharmacy 5661912
- Ferdous pharmacy 778356
- Al Asema pharmacy 4637055
- Naioukh pharmacy 4636772
- Al Salam pharmacy 4636730
- Yacoub pharmacy 4644945
- Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660

- Najib pharmacy 847632
- IRBID: Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852
- Al Quds pharmacy (—)
- ZARQA: Dr. Akram Haddad 985550
- Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

- Food Control Centre 4637111
- Civil Defence Department 5661111
- Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
- Civil Defence Emergency 199
- Rescue Police 192-4621111, 4637777
- Fire Brigade 4617(01)
- Blood Bank 775121
- Highway Police 843402
- Traffic Police 896390
- Public Security Dept. 4630321
- Hotel Complaints 5605800
- Price Complaints 5661176
- Water & Sewerage Complaints 897467
- Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
- Telephone Information directory assistance 121
- Overseas Calls 010230
- Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4632301
- Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101
- Jordan Television 773111
- Radio Jordan 774111
- Water Authority 5680100
- J. Electricity Authority 815615
- Electric Power Co. 4636381

- RJ Flight Information 44-53200
- Queen Alia Int. Airport 44-53200

HOSPITALS

- AMMAN: The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
- The Islamic, Abdi 5666137
- Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 836813, 856856
- Luqaila 4630195
- Khalidi Maternity 4642816
- Akileh Maternity 4642412
- Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
- Malhas, J. Amman 4636140
- Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
- Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
- University Hospital 5353444
- Al-Musherruf Hospital 5667279
- Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164
- Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7710113
- Al-Bashir 77511126
- Army, Marka 8916115
- Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50
- Amal Hospital 5674155

ZARQA: Govt. Hospital

- Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983321
- Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
- Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
- Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
- IRBID: Princess Basma Hospital

- 021275555
- 02127275
- 021247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

- This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 144
- 53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone (44) (52700)
- 20:40 — Rome (RJ)
- 20:50 — London, Berlin (RJ)
- 21:25 — Rome (add) (RJ)
- 23:10 — Vienna, Amman (RJ)
- 01:00 — Cairo (RJ)
- 02:00 — Larnaca (RJ)

ARRIVALS

- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 09:30 — Jeddah (RJ)
- 09:45 — Larnaca (RJ)
- 10:00 — Bombay (RJ)
- 10:05 — Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
- 10:25 — Beirut (RJ)
- 10:50 — Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
- 17:45 — New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
- 18:00 — Paris (RJ)
- 18:30 — Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ)
- 19:10 — Athens (RJ)
- 19:20 — Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

- 10:55 — Amman, Vienna (RJ)
- 11:15 — Amman, Rome (add) (RJ)
- 12:15 — Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
- 12:30 — Rome (RJ)
- 12:30 — Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
- 13:20 — Athens (RJ)
- 13:20 — Frankfurt, London (RJ)
- 20:05 — Amman, Brussels (add) (RJ)
- 21:10 — Cairo (RJ)
- 21:20 — Jeddah (RJ)
- 21:30 — New Delhi (RJ)
- 22:25 — Damascus (RJ)
- 22:40 — Bangkok (RJ)
- 22:55 — Larnaca (add) (RJ)
- 23:00 — Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
- 00:30 — Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
- 01:00 — Amman, Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

- 06:30 — Tel Aviv (LA)
- 11:00 — Sanaa, Ta'iz (YY)
- 12:30 — Jeddah (SV)
- 12:50 — Moscow (SU)
- 13:30 — Abu Dhabi (GF)
- 15:40 — Doha (QR)
- 19:00 — Paris (AF)
- 20:25 — Tel Aviv (LA)
- 21:40 — Cairo (MS)
- 22:20 — Istanbul (TK)
- 23:35 — Larnaca (CY)
- 23:40 — Beirut (ME)
- 01:15 — Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
- 04:15 — London (BA)

DEPARTURES

- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 06:30 — Larnaca (RJ)
- 06:45 — Beirut (RJ)
- 10:20 — Amman (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)
- 10:35 — Tel Aviv (QAIA) (RW)
- 23:25 — Amman (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
- Royal Wings (RW)
- 08:00 — Amman (from Marka Airport) (RW)
- 08:45 — Tel Aviv (from QAIA) (RW)
- 21:30 — Amman (from QAIA) (RW)

Home N

Princess Haya

AMMAN (Pana) — Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein today celebrated her 24th birthday. The princess, who is the daughter of King Hussein and Queen Alia, received her education in Jordan and abroad, then enrolled in the United States where she studied political science and philosophy. Princess Haya's interests include philosophy, history, and languages. She is also a member of the Jordanian Olympic team and has participated in international sports events. She has participated in various international competitions, including the World Figure Skating Championships.

Health minister calls for closer regional cooperation in fighting diseases

AMMAN (Pana) — Minister of Health Ashraf Haddad today called for closer regional cooperation in fighting diseases.

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PRINCESS ALIA ATTENDS CHILDREN'S ART EXHIBITION: HRH Princess Alia on Tuesday inspects drawings during a visit to a children's art exhibition held at the Franciscan School in western Amman. Princess Alia toured the exhibition and was briefed on the school's skill training programme, which is held annually (Petra photo).

Yeltsin's Chechenya envoy kidnap suspects arrested

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chechen authorities Saturday placed under arrest the bodyguard and driver of President Boris Yeltsin's special envoy to the Chechen republic, 24 hours after gunmen kidnapped the official, agencies said.

Russia's top Chechen negotiator said Saturday the abduction aimed to further undermine the stalled peace process between Moscow and Grozny, which won de facto independence from Russia after a bitter 21-month war.

Gunmen in military fatigues grabbed Valentin Vlasov from his car Friday near the Ingushetia village of Assinovskaya, close to the Chechen border, the first senior Russian official seized in Russia's unruly Caucasus region.

Returning to Moscow from urgent talks with Chechen officials on the kidnap, Ivan Rybkin, Mr. Yeltsin's pointman on Moscow's fraught relations with its breakaway republic, said the abduction was "a challenge" which required "an adequate response."

"The Russian president's envoy for Chechenya was abducted by people who believe a peace dialogue between Grozny and Moscow is not beneficial," Interfax cited him as saying. "We did not think that people dealing with the establishment of peace would become targets" for the kidnappers, said Mr. Rybkin, who has sent a report to Mr. Yeltsin on his talks with senior Chechen officials at Ingushetia's Slepitsovskiy airport.

Chechenya and Russia's other North Caucasus republics have become a fertile ground for hostage-takers since the 21-month Chechen war of secession ended in August 1996 with de facto independence for the tiny Muslim republic.

Alexander Lebed, who as Russia's national security chief negotiated an end to the Chechen conflict in August 1996, said: "I know Vlasov well. He has done a great deal for a peaceful settlement of the Chechen problem. That is why he became a target."

Mr. Lebed, a gruff ex-paratrooper general with his

sights set on claiming the Russian presidency, said he believed the Chechen authorities were not linked to the abduction.

Mr. Rybkin said the "Chechen leadership is concerned and shocked over what happened," adding that Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov would Saturday urge Chechens to help secure Mr. Vlasov's release at a Grozny rally.

There was no immediate confirmation of the report in the Chechen capital.

Chechen prosecutors meanwhile formally arrested Mr. Vlasov's driver and bodyguard, Russian news agencies reported. Deputy Chechen Prosecutor Magomed Magomadov told the Interfax news agency charges would be decided over the next "10-15 days."

The suspects, taken in for questioning Friday on their return to their native Chechenya following the abduction, can be held 20 days before charges are brought.

Gen. Magomadov said Mr. Vlasov's driver was being investigated for negli-

gence and his bodyguard for failing to offer resistance to the attackers.

But he accused Mr. Vlasov of failing to take adequate security measures, frequently travelling with only one or two bodyguards despite repeated warnings about his safety.

"Vlasov himself also showed criminal negligence, travelling along a very dangerous route where people are periodically abducted accompanied by only one bodyguard."

Chechen "foreign minister" Movladi Udugov claimed the abduction was the work of "forces controlled by Russian special services, the same forces behind previous kidnappings."

The woeful state of fledgling police forces coupled with chronic unemployment and a flood of weapons have combined to make kidnapping a growth industry in the northern Caucasus.

Some 65 hostages including at least six foreigners are currently being held in the volatile region, according to a special Chechen anti-abduction unit.



Valentin Vlasov, Russian President Boris Yeltsin's personal envoy to Chechenya, was kidnapped in the breakaway region on May 1. Mr. Vlasov, shown in this October 1997 file photo, was an important figure behind the scenes in Moscow's attempts to find a lasting settlement with the secessionist Chechen leadership since Russia withdrew its troops in 1996 after nearly two years of fighting (Reuters photo)

Grenades thrown near presidential palace in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE (AFP) — Hand grenades exploded near the presidential palace Saturday in the capital of Tajikistan here in latest clashes between government troops and Islamic rebels in the former Soviet central Asian republic.

An AFP eyewitness said on one was hurt, but few people ventured on to the streets, shops were shut and little transport was available after at least 20 government troops were killed and 80 wounded in clashes with insurgents and government troops outside Dushanbe Thursday and Friday, according to Russian television reports.

A stray shell fell in the courtyard of the Pakistani embassy Saturday, damaging the facade and breaking windows, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Defence ministry sources said search operations were in progress over a radius of up to 20 kilometres around Dushanbe to track down isolated small groups of Islamic fighters still around after the majority had retreated into mountain bases.

Fighting broke out Thursday between some 200 to 300 insurgents and government troops near Dushanbe. Automatic fire could still be heard Friday evening some seven kilometres east of the city.

Government military sources were quoted by ITAR-TASS news agency as saying the Islamic fighters attacked government checkpoints and a supply convoy on a road near Kofarnikhon, east of Dushanbe.

Tajikistan, a former Soviet republic, became independent after the Soviet collapse in 1991.

A peace process was begun in June last year between its present ex-Communist leadership supported by President Boris Yeltsin's government in Moscow and Islamic insurgents to end a five-year civil war costing thousands of lives.

Yet violent incidents continue regularly in the mountainous republic bordering Afghanistan, where Islamic fighters have been operating out of rear bases.

Islamic forces still control entire regions in the east of the country, and a power-sharing deal brokered in the peace pact is only just beginning to be implemented.

Opposition leader Said Abdullo Nuri has blamed recent attacks on a breakaway Islamic armed group which has been active since the June agreement.

He denounced the clashes as "a provocation aimed at blocking the peace accords."

FDA clears ZOCOR™ to reduce risk of first stroke, transient ischemic attack

WEST POINT, Pennsylvania

Merck & Co., Inc. has announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the Merck cholesterol-lowering drug ZOCOR™ (simvastatin, MSD) to reduce the risk of first stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA) or mini-stroke in people with high cholesterol and coronary heart disease — those who are at the highest risk for cardiovascular events.

This important new use of ZOCOR is based on an analysis of the landmark Simvastatin Survival Study (4S) which showed that people taking ZOCOR had significantly fewer strokes and TIAs compared to the group taking placebo.

"In 4S, ZOCOR reduced the risk of stroke and TIA by 28 percent," said Terje Pedersen, M.D., 4S lead investigator and head physician at Coronary Care Unit, Aker University Hospital in Oslo, Norway.

"We have known for some time that controlling high blood pressure is essential to reducing the risk of stroke. Now we know that treatment with ZOCOR provides a powerful new weapon in battling debilitating strokes."

"This FDA approval should heighten awareness of the need to actively treat high cholesterol in patients with heart disease," said Roger S. Blumenthal, M.D., director of the Ciccarone Center for Preventative Cardiology at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD.

The findings that lowering cholesterol can prevent stroke, along with other advances, has prompted the National Stroke Association (NSA) to issue new Stroke Prevention Guidelines in conjunction with a panel of leading national experts.

The NSA recommends that all people know their cholesterol levels and treat high cholesterol with diet, exercise and medication to reduce the risk of stroke. In addition to high cholesterol, other risk factors for stroke include high blood pressure, heart disease, smoking and obesity.

According to the NSA, stroke is the third leading cause of death in the U.S., killing 157,991 people in 1995 (the last year for which figures were available), and accounting for one in every 15 deaths.

In the U.S., someone has a stroke every minute, every 3.4 minutes someone dies of

stroke.

For those who survive, stroke is one of the leading causes of adult disability, affecting about four million Americans, as well as their families and caregivers. The landmark Framingham Heart Study found that after suffering a stroke, 31 per cent of patients require assistance, 20 per cent need help walking and 71 per cent are vocationally impaired after seven years. In economic terms, stroke-related expenses annually cost \$30 billion to the U.S. health care system.

The stroke-reduction data are the latest in a series of important clinical benefits derived from 4S, the first study to define the life-saving benefits of lowering cholesterol with ZOCOR.

In the five-year trial, involving 4,444 men and women high cholesterol and coronary heart disease, those at highest risk for cardiovascular events — the group treated with ZOCOR 90 or 40 mg once daily had:

- 28 per cent fewer fatal or non-fatal strokes and TIAs;
- 42 per cent fewer deaths from heart disease, resulting in 30 per cent fewer deaths from any cause.

In 4S, ZOCOR was well-tolerated. ZOCOR should not be used by anyone on concomitant therapy with the tetra-class calcium-channel blocker mibefradil, allergic to any of its components, with liver disease, or by women who are pregnant, nursing or likely to become pregnant.

Muscle pain or weakness in patients taking ZOCOR may indicate a rare but serious side effect and should be reported to their doctor. Doctors should perform blood tests to check liver function before and periodically during treatment with ZOCOR.

Despite the landmark findings of 4S and guidelines from the American Heart Association (AHA), National Cholesterol Education Programme (NCEP) and NSA calling for aggressive treatment about 60 per cent of people who have already had a heart attack are not taking the appropriate steps to control their cholesterol.

In addition, another 16 million Americans without heart diseases who could benefit from lowering their high cholesterol to recommended levels are still going untreated.

Middle East Health News

First Khmer Rouge refugees arrive at new Thai camp

HUAY SAMRAN, Thailand (AFP) — The first group of some 400 Khmer Rouge villagers escorted by the Thai military arrived at their new camp in northern Thailand Saturday afternoon after fleeing renewed fighting in Cambodia.

The villagers began arriving at Huay Samran reservoir some eight kilometres inside Thailand in small clusters at 3:00 p.m. local time (0800 GMT), mainly on foot and with their meagre belongings in open trucks.

They were met by a United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees official who counted them, while Thailand's provincial Red Cross provided medical treatment, mainly to children suffering from diarrhoea.

Authorities in Si Sa Ket have prepared a 40-acre fenced-off area at Huay Samran to accommodate the villagers, and have posted guards for their protection.

The Thai military said Friday that between 20,000 and 30,000 Khmer Rouge villagers crossed into Thailand to escape renewed fighting

between the guerrillas and government forces.

They said the villagers, mainly relatives of Khmer Rouge soldiers battling Cambodian government forces in the Anlong Veng area, fled across the border because they feared food and water shortages as a result of heavy fighting.

Cambodia's Khmer Rouge, who plunged their country into genocide in the 1970s, are on the verge of final defeat, according to sources close to the guerrillas.

Dissident Zhou Guoqiang released after brief detention

BEIJING (AFP) — Beijing dissident Zhou Guoqiang said Saturday he had been freed after police briefly detained him without explanation the previous day.

He said police released him from the Xingyuanjie police station at 11:00 a.m. Friday, three hours after plainclothes officers forcefully took him away from his home without explanation.

Dissident sources had speculated that the detention aimed to prevent Mr. Zhou, an advocate of free trade unions, from staging any protests during official celebrations of international Labour Day.

"There was no particular reason — it was just to restrict my freedom," he told AFP, adding that police refrained from questioning or lecturing him about his political activities.

Police warned the dissident against leaving home on April 29, when U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrived in Beijing for a 48-hour visit, but his freedom of movement has now been restored.

Dissident Jiang Qisheng was also detained for several hours Thursday to prevent him from approaching Mrs. Albright, who left Beijing Friday morning.

She said that during her top-level meetings with Chinese officials she spoke "quite directly" on the need for freedom of peaceful political expression and on the "still-large number of prisoners of conscience" in the country.

Mr. Zhou has been an activist for the democratic movement in China for some 20 years, several of which he has spent in prison. In 1979 he took part in the Democracy Wall movement in Beijing together with Wei Jingsheng, an editor-in-chief of an anti-establishment magazine.

Australian minister plays down shoot-to-kill order

ADELAIDE, Australia (R) — Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer Saturday played down shoot-to-kill orders issued against an Australian peacekeeping force in Papua New Guinea's Bougainville Island, saying there was no threat to Australian lives.

Mr. Downer said the order by Revolutionary Army Commander Francis Ona posed no threat to Australian troops or the peace process on the war-ravaged island.

The force was operating amid tight security and would not be in any danger from a threat by Mr. Ona to shoot Australian troops who enter areas under his control on Bougainville, Mr. Downer said.

Mr. Downer said the government was taking every possible precaution to protect Australian peacekeeping forces and urged Mr. Ona to join the peace process.

"The security situation on Bougainville hasn't changed in the last few weeks or even the last few days," Mr. Downer said.

"I also add that Australians don't go to parts of Bougainville where they're not invited or they're not welcome nor do the other peace monitors."

Mr. Ona, who did not attend the signing ceremony of a Bougainville peace accord Thursday, claimed Australia's motive for wanting peace was to reopen the giant Panguna copper and gold mine, which is majority owned by Rio Tinto. Canberra has denied any such motive.

"I have issued an order to shoot on sight. The Australians are not welcome on the island of Bougainville. All along the Australian government has contributed to this nine years of war," Mr. Ona told the Sydney Morning Herald by satellite telephone from his island stronghold.

Australian officials have said that Mr. Ona commands the loyalty of only a few hundred rebels.

Mr. Ona also said he had dismissed his deputy Joseph Kabul and the rebel's military leader Sam Kauona from their positions.

Both men were signatories to a ceasefire agreement and played key roles in the peace negotiations which were conducted under New Zealand auspices.

A Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) spokesman said there would soon be around 250 Australians in the Bougainville peace-monitoring operation, which also includes monitors from New Zealand, Vanuatu and Fiji.

"At this time there's been no direct threat. We've been working in the same areas for six months and there've been no incidents. They're unarmed and they've been welcomed everywhere they've been."

"Of course you can never describe it as a situation without any risk, but to date it's been a very warm welcome," the DFAT spokesman said.

The Bougainville revolt started with a landowner campaign against the Panguna mine in 1988, which closed the mine and erupted into violence in 1989.

The rebels sought to secede from Papua New Guinea.

Rio Tinto has said it would cost an estimated \$600 million to reopen Panguna but that it has no such plans in the short-term, preferring to wait for political as well as military stability to return to the island.

At least 32 people have died after drinking bootleg liquor in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Saturday.

The Indian Express newspaper said the toll was likely to pass 60 with more and more people being brought to hospital and was the worst such case reported in the state.

The deaths took place at Bentolia village Thursday, the news agency said. Twenty people were taken to hospital immediately afterwards.

State government officials said the victims, including women, bought the illicit liquor from a private store and died after a late night party.

Three policemen in Bentolia were sacked for not closing down the illegal liquor store, PTI said.

At least 32 die of moonshine liquor in northern India

NEW DELHI (AFP) — At least 32 people have died after drinking bootleg liquor in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Saturday.

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Three policemen in Bentolia were sacked for not closing down the illegal liquor store, PTI said.

Clinton fulfills promise visits daughter's political school

PALO ALTO, California (AP) — President Bill Clinton escaped the political heat in Washington here this week in Washington to spend a weekend at the residence of his daughter, Chelsea, and her husband, Marc Mezlin, who is a political strategist.

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Indonesian student

Indonesian students clashed with security forces in two cities Saturday and three students were injured as they protested against the country's new curriculum.

Students held a demonstration in at least two cities on Java and Sumatra, and in Jakarta, where they held a demonstration in the sprawling city.

The police said the demonstration was peaceful and that the students were not injured.

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Clinton fundraises, visits daughter as political storm rumbles

PALO ALTO, California (AFP) — President Bill Clinton escaped the political heat in Washington here this weekend, refusing to respond to barbs from House Speaker Newt Gingrich and special prosecutor Kenneth Starr.

Mr. Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived Friday at this affluent city on the San Francisco peninsula to raise money and visit with daughter Chelsea, who is completing her first year at nearby Stanford University.

Mr. Clinton, who in recent days has shed his relative silence and resumed his partisan attacks, shared turf with the president though they did not cross paths at Stanford.

He has rebuked Mr. Clinton for stonewalling Mr. Starr's investigation of alleged misdeeds and for invoking executive privilege to prevent two senior aides — communications specialist Sidney Blumenthal and deputy counsel Bruce Lindsey — from being forced to testify before a grand jury about their conversations with the president.

"No one is above the law, including the president of the United States," Mr. Clinton told a conservative audience at the Hoover Institution think tank located on the sprawling Stanford campus.

"That goes back to the English civil war. Charles I didn't agree and he lost his head. He was very serious about this for the Anglo

Saxon world of 1650. And this is at the very centre of our concept of freedom. That is why Richard Nixon had to resign," the Republican leader said.

Mr. Starr also raised the issue of executive privilege while addressing a crowd earlier Friday in San Antonio, Texas.

"No 20th century president tested executive privilege in court until President Nixon, in what came to be known as Watergate," said Mr. Starr, speaking on the 24th anniversary of Richard Nixon's declaration that a president had the power to disregard subpoenas by invoking executive privilege.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision that a president can be subject to a subpoena led to Richard Nixon's resignation in 1974.

Thursday Mr. Starr managed to obtain the indictment of former Clinton administration official Webster Hubbell on tax fraud and took steps to bring former White House intern Monica Lewinsky before a grand jury.

The moves brought the investigation to its most intense point since charges erupted in January over whether Ms. Lewinsky was asked to commit perjury about her alleged sexual relationship with the president.

Friday Mr. Clinton spent more than an hour speaking to workers at Thermo Inc. in San Jose, California and

seemed glad to have the opportunity to temporarily get away from Washington.

"Most of all, I thank all of you for giving me a chance to leave Washington and come out and visit the real world. It's great," Mr. Clinton told several hundred workers and visitors.

Thermo employees responded by praising the president and declining to address the controversies dogging him.

"I feel the way a lot of people do. If he's doing his job, he's okay with me," plumber Jacob Calero said.

After the visit to the factory, which makes air conditioning equipment for high-tech companies, Mr. Clinton went to play golf despite overcast skies and an occasional drizzle.

Mr. Clinton had three fundraising events planned this weekend, including an appearance late Friday at the house of real estate magnate Walter Shorenstein in the exclusive hillside community of Portola Valley east of Stanford.

It is Mr. Clinton's 37th trip to California, a state he continues to tap for funds.

He also was to visit the nearby home of Steven Jobs, personal computer pioneer, interim chief executive officer of Apple Computer and president of Pixar.

Much of Saturday and Sunday was set aside for private time with his family.



A woman injured in a jet-foil collision is carried from an ambulance at Princess Margaret Hospital in Hong Kong (Reuters photo)

Over 80 hospitalised in HK jet-foil crash

HONG KONG (R) — Over 80 people were taken to hospital when a jet-foil en route to Macau crashed after hitting an underwater object near Hong Kong's new airport, government radio said Saturday.

The deputy district police commander at Chek Lap Kok, Gary Wilson, said the airport's rescue centre had helped in evacuation efforts.

"All the rescue facilities were here ready and waiting. The fire services sent out two large rescue boats and they picked up a total of 207 people...

many of them were sent to hospital, the exact figure was 86," the report quoted Mr. Wilson as saying.

Medical Superintendent Leung Lai-Kwong of the Princess Margaret Hospital said 12 patients were admitted to the accident and emergency department of his hospital.

"All are in stable and satisfactory conditions," he said. "Some have injuries to legs and arms, some have been admitted to wards with fractured limbs," he was quoted as saying.

Serb-Albanian fighting flares in Kosovo

TURICEVAC, Serbia (R) — Fighting flared inside Kosovo's Drenica region Saturday as Serbian police backed by armour and heavy weapons traded fire with ethnic Albanians defending their villages.

Small arms, heavy machine-gun and mortar fire echoed across rolling hills about 50 km west of Pristina, capital of the southern Serbian province whose Albanian majority want independence.

Reporters spotted refugees moving on foot from Stupelj, a village near Klinka, which they said had been attacked by Serb forces at midnight, causing most of the 25 families there to flee.

The body of Agim Emin, 35, lay under a white sheet at his family's bullet-pocked home as relatives prepared to bury him at sundown to avoid police sniper fire.

Villagers said he was shot dead Friday morning when police armoured personnel carriers advanced on the village and opened fire on the seven houses of the Emin family.

The top right side of Agim Emin's head was blown away in what villagers said was a hail of gunfire directed at their houses, some of which were occupied by women and children hiding from the police.

The attack on Turicevac evidently began after Serb forces attempted to advance on neighbouring Racanica and were fired upon by villagers and driven back.

Reporters Saturday saw 53-year-old Rifat Snakaj leading eleven children from Stupelj to Obria along a rutted dirt road in an attempt to find safety from the Serb attack which had begun in the middle of the night.

"We have been walking for five hours. We are not terrorising anyone, we are defending our homes. How can we be terrorists then they are killing us in our houses?"

Mr. Snakaj was wearing two hand grenades in the pockets of his shirt and a black fisherman's cap on which the initials KLA had been embroidered in red thread.

The letters stand for the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is waging a guerrilla campaign for independence for the province, where more than 100 people have been killed since a crackdown by Serb police in March.

Women residents of Turicevac said police came into the cluster of eight houses Friday and threatened to kill any male over the age of 17.

The women said the man who spoke to them was in civilian clothes but spoke in Albanian and was escorted by a large number of police with camouflage paint on their faces, bullet-proof vests and battle helmets, as well as automatic weapons.

A major police checkpoint which occupied the main road running from Srbica to Klinka and which overlooked the village of Turicevac had been abandoned Saturday morning. All the sandbags which had protected gun emplacements had been removed.

Ethnic Albanians in the area said the Serbs had relocated their forces further west along the road.

Hong Kong plans tougher measures to fight copyright pirates

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong government is considering clamping down on copyright piracy with tougher measures, including confiscation of the assets of those convicted of such crimes, a government spokesman said Saturday.

The tougher measures could also include closure orders on premises, including shops and factories, which have been engaged in intellectual property rights piracy-related business so that they could not be sold or leased out for a period of time, he said.

The government also planned to explore the feasibility of setting up a copyright title verification database and intro-

ducing some form of legal liability against end-users who purchased pirated optical discs.

Washington put Hong Kong on a trade watch list last year due to its copyright piracy record, but since then the government has significantly stepped up the fight against counterfeit goods.

In the first three months of this year alone the authorities seized 2.5 million fake compact discs, compared with 4.5 million discs for the whole of 1997.

In view of the imminent announcement of the U.S. Special 301 report, which could lead to trade sanctions, Brian Chau, secretary for trade and industry, said the govern-

ment would be most disappointed if Hong Kong were retained on the watch list because such action would be unreasonable.

Mr. Chau told reporters late Friday that Hong Kong was not pandering to U.S. threats of sanctions when the government recently stepped up action against intellectual property rights piracy.

He criticised the U.S. refusal to delist as being "too high handed," adding "we do not require foreign governments to tell us what to do."

Mr. Chau said the tougher measures were considered in order to save Hong Kong's international reputation and the interests of its people.

Indonesian students clash with security forces as protests mount

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesian students clashed with security forces in two towns Saturday and three demonstrators were injured as protesters across the country stepped up their demands for reform, witnesses said.

Thousands of students held rallies in universities in at least five main towns on Java and Sumatra, a day after President Suharto issued a warning to these demanding constitutional reform.

Violence broke out between students and security forces in Medan, the capital of North Sumatra, and in Jakarta. More than 1,000 students gathered at the private Nomenzen University in central Medan and clashed with security forces while attempting to take their protest onto the streets, lawyer Butar-Butar of the Legal Aid Institute said.

A military police jeep was torched during the clash but there were no immediate reports of injuries or arrests, Butar-Butar said.

Security forces prevented more than 100 students from various universities who assembled at the Academy for Foreign Languages in central Jakarta from marching to the nearby Indonesia state university to join a protest rally.

At least three students were injured as police used batons and teargas to disperse them. The students retreated into the campus.

Some 500 students of the Higher School for Informatics and Computer Management in Cileduk, south Jakarta, rallied at their campus to press for immediate political reforms, a witness said. At the Indonesia university, over 2,000 gathered in front of the medicine faculty to listen to a free speech forum to commemorate Education Day and to press for reforms.

They included scores of students from several other universities in town, some 20 highschool students, some university staff and prominent sociologist Selo Sumartono.

Hundreds of other students from other universities milled with hundreds of onlookers outside the university fence as they were unable to enter the campus.

More than 100 members of the security forces, including some military police, cordoned off the university to prevent the students from moving off the campus.

The students said they had planned to march to the monument of the country's independence proclamation, about a

kilometre southeast of Indonesia University.

In Yogyakarta, central Java, some 6,000 students gathered for a protest rally in front of the Gajah Mada state university's main hall, a university staff member said.

"They have now dispersed but at one point there were over 6,000 students gathered here," said the staff, who identified himself as Agung.

He added that hundreds of

students from the university's master's programme also marched on the streets of campus to demand reforms before they joined the gathering in front of the hall.

In Solo, some 60 kilometres northeast of Yogyakarta, some 200 students gathered at the main gate of the 11 March University to listen to a free speech forum, said Slamet, a member of the university's administration department.

In Surabaya, the capital of East Java, some 3,000 students held a free speech forum at the front gate of the Surabaya Institute of Technology, a witness said.

The students heard representatives of the population, including taxi and pedicab drivers, housewives and high school students, speak about their suffering during the current economic crisis.

In Padang, West Sumatra,

some 1,000 students of the Bung Hatta University marched to the Lalong hero cemetery amid light security.

The authorities closed the long avenue leading to the cemetery to traffic to allow the march to proceed, a resident said.

The students carried posters and banners, most calling for lower prices and reforms but several also calling for President Suharto to resign.

Building a performance aircraft is all about the balance of opposing forces. Velocity competes with inertia. Thrust with gravity. Heart with cold. The same applies to a performance car. A suspension system

comfortable enough to iron out the roughest road must have a chassis firm enough to cradle you around the corners. An engine powerful enough to produce exhilarating mid-range torque must have the handling to

match. A vehicle that delivers exceptional performance must have a safety system that gives you the confidence to use it. This thinking has led to a unique synthesis of power and restraint, of tradition and innovation,

strength and agility: the new Saab 95. A car that perfectly demonstrates our key belief: There should be no forces outside your control.

Our heritage with aircraft led us to a very simple principle : There should be no forces outside your control.



Introducing the Saab 95

Iraqi economy has gone to the dogs

By Patrick Cockburn
in Baghdad

FRIDAY IS the day of the dog market in Baghdad. It takes place in the Souq Al Gazil, a stretch of empty ground beside the main road on the edge of the main market, which echoes with the sound of several hundred barking dogs from early in the morning.

They come in all sizes from dapper terriers to grim German Shepherds. Their owners mostly are selling them as guard dogs. These are popular among Iraqis because of the increase in robberies and theft as the country gets poorer as a result of sanctions.

"Nimr is a clever dog," said a man, including the pugnacious hound beside him. "He will tear a piece out of any enemy who gets near your home. But if he sees somebody whom he knows is a friend of his owner he will never attack him."

The expression on Nimr's face did not give one complete confidence in his friend-or-foe identification system, but he looked as if he was worth the 25,000 Iraqi dinars (£15) being asked for him.

Iraqis do not usually keep dogs as indoor pets, but in one corner of the Souq Al Gazil a group of better dressed owners were disposing of poodles and dachshunds who were clearly not cut out to guard anybody.

The most popular pets for sale are pigeons, doves, parrots and budgies. But in the middle of the souq is an entire street filled with people buying and selling goldfish along with fish tanks and ornaments.

"When Iraqis want to enjoy themselves on a Friday they go to the markets," said an Iraqi friend. From early in the morning they pour into Shurjah, the central market area on the east bank of the Tigris.

Since sanctions were imposed eight years ago the markets have grown as Iraqis try to survive by selling and buying small quantities of goods. Nothing exposes the real poverty of the country better. People sit for hours in the sun trying to sell a broken electric fire or some cracked plates.

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There is also the continuing need for spare parts. The streets are full of cars, but none have been imported since 1990. They are cheap to run because 60 litres of gasoline — the only item not in short supply or very expensive — costs just £2. In one morning two cars I was travelling in broke down. The first had a broken fuel pump. The second started emitting clouds of smoke or steam from the engine. In each case the only remedy for the driver was to go immediately to Shurjah market and try to find the spare part.

There are people with money in Baghdad. In the bird market a merchant showed us two hawks for hunting, each tethered to the stump of a tree. He said:

"The first comes from Kurdistan and I will sell him for 750,000 dinars (£450) the other is from Iran and will cost you one-and-a-quarter million dinars (£750)." He seemed confident he would find somebody to buy them.

The saddest place in the whole of Shurjah market is probably the streets where Iraqi intellectuals come to sell their books. Many are laid out on the pavement off Al Rashid Street. Some were obviously once part of somebody's university course, like Henry IV Part One or a battered Penguin classic edition of Sophocles.

Baghdad does not show the same signs of poverty as Beirut did in the civil war, when there were obvious symptoms of the collapse of government. Rubbish either roused where it was left or was consumed in bonfires which burned all over the city. But Baghdad still works. Cars obey traffic lights, though there are frequent electricity black-outs. There are also signs of better times ahead with more foreigners turning up, looking for business. There are pilgrims, mostly Lebanese and Iranian, going to the great shrines at Kerbala and Najaf. There are hopes, perhaps misplaced, that the crisis and near war in February brought the end of sanctions nearer.

But this does not do much good to the mass of Iraqis. The collapse of the immunisation programme means diseases like polio, tuberculosis, meningitis and measles have become common. Most telling of all are the beggars on the streets. Last week, as we drove into Baghdad, three girls, all beggars and all under eight, launched themselves at our still moving car and clung onto the doorhandles and wing mirror, allowing themselves to be dragged along the road until we could stop and pay them off.

— The Independent

The myth of the Zionist anti-Fascism

Les mythes fondateur de la politique israélienne (The Fundamental Myths of Israeli Politics)
By Roger Garaudy
Samizdat 1996

Editor's note: This is the second and final part of the original French text of Roger Garaudy's book.

ROGER GARAUDY frankly admits that when World War II broke out almost all the Jewish organisations including Weizman himself came to the side of the Allies but the German Zionists adopted the reverse attitude. The latter were neither anti-fascist nor anti-Nazi. From 1933 to 1941 the German Zionists followed a compromise policy and even later collaborated with Hitler. Although the Nazi authorities were persecuting German Jews by kicking them out of public functions, they nevertheless entertained a dialogue with the leaders of the German Zionists, treated them favourably and distinguished them from the "fundamentalist" Jews.

The accusation of collusion with the Nazi authorities cannot be addressed to the overwhelming majority of the Jews. Indeed some of them served in Spain from 1936 to 1939 in the International Brigades against the Spanish fascists. This accusation can be levelled against the organised strong minority of Zionist leaders whose sole preoccupation was to create a Jewish state. Chaim Weizman and other Zionist leaders declared war on Germany. This declaration however created a problem for the German Jews as they were consequently interned in the concentration camps for being considered under the jurisdiction of a people at war with Germany just as the United States of America interned its own citizens of Japanese origin when it declared war on Japan.

The object of the Zionists was not to save Jews but to create a Jewish state in Palestine. Ben Gurion stated frankly to the Zionist Labour leaders that: "If I were to know that it is possible to save all the Jewish children of Germany by sending them to England, or only half of them could be brought to Israel, I will choose the second solution, because we should take into consideration not only the lives of those children but also the

history of the people of Israel. "(Quoted from Y'von Gelbner book, "Zionist Policy and the Fate of European Jewry"). In the opinion of Ben Gurion the task of the Zionists was not to save the "remnants" of Israel who were in Europe, but to save the land of Israel for the Jewish people. Again the historian Tom Segev says in his book "The Seventh Million" that the rescuing of the Jews of Europe was not a priority to the leaders. In their eyes the founding of the state is of prime importance.

Garaudy quotes many other Jewish authorities to the effect that what mattered to the Zionist leaders was the founding of the state of Israel and not the saving of the Jews of Europe from the Holocaust.

On the other hand Garaudy produces ample authentic evidence on the collaboration of the German Zionists with Nazi Germany. Indeed the Zionist organisations of the German Jews enjoyed legal existence in Germany up to 1938, five years after the accession of Hitler to power while the econom-

my life I participated in many painful conversations but I have never felt before so miserable and ashamed as during those two hours of meeting. I felt in my inner soul that Benès was right."

Eichman's trial in Jerusalem revealed in part at least the exchange between Zionist Jews useful to the creation of the Jewish state (rich personalities, technicians, young men useful to the Jewish army) with the less advantaged mass of Jews who were abandoned to their fate in the hands of Hitler.

In her book "Eichman a Jerusalem" Hanna Arendt, one of the eminent defenders of the Jewish cause, has shown the passivity and complicity of the "Jewish Councils" with the Nazis, two-thirds of which were made up of Zionists. According to Isaiah Trunk 50 per cent of the Jews could have been saved if they had not followed the instructions of the Jewish Councils (See "Judenrat" by Isaiah Trunk).

The Zionist leaders contacted and collaborated with the fascists, Garaudy says. Chaim Weizman

Garaudy quotes many other Jewish authorities to the effect that what mattered to the Zionist leaders was the founding of the state of Israel and not the saving of the Jews of Europe from the Holocaust

ic cooperation between German Zionist leaders and the German government started in 1933 and continued up to 1941, that is to say eight years after Hitler came to power, and thus the economic boycott against Nazi Germany was broken. Naum Goldman, president of the World Zionist Organisation, mentions in his "Autobiography" his dramatic meeting in 1935 with Edward Benès, then minister of foreign affairs of Czechoslovakia. In that meeting Edward Benès rebuked the Zionists for having broken the boycott against Germany by concluding commercial agreements with it and the refusal of the World Zionist Organisation to organise the resistance against Nazism. Goldman said: "During

and Naum Goldman met with Mussolini in 1923 and in 1927 respectively. The duce promised to help in the creation of the Jewish state.

Rudolf Kastner, vice-president of the Zionist Organisation, negotiated with Eichman on the following basis: If Eichman allows the departure to Palestine of 1684 Jews (capitalists, technicians, military people) who are useful to the building of the Jewish state, Kastner promised that he would make the 460,000 Hungarian Jews believe that they would not be deported to Auschwitz, but that they would simply be transferred. As is well-known Kastner did not act alone but with the agreement of the Zionist leaders, some of

whom were in 1955 at the time of Eichman's trial in Jerusalem, members of the Israeli government. In order to apparently prevent Kastner from telling the truth, he was assassinated on the steps of the Law Courts buildings. Afterwards the Israeli government petitioned the Supreme Court for his rehabilitation which it did accordingly.

The Zionist political collaboration with the Nazis reached its peak in 1941 when the most extremist Zionist gang led by Abraham Stern and after his death by a triumvirate of which Yitzhak Shamir was a member "committed an unpardonable crime from a moral point of view for calling for an alliance with Hitler, with Nazi Germany, against Britain. (See the book "Ben Gurion, the Armed Prophet" by Bar Zohar). One of the historic leaders of the Stern Gang Israel Eldad has affirmed in an article published in the Yediot Aharonot dated Feb. 4, 1983, the authenticity of the negotiations between his group and official representatives of Nazi Germany. He frankly admitted that his colleagues had explained to the Nazis that there was an identity of interest between the New Order in Europe as conceived by the Germans and the aspirations of the Jewish people in Palestine who are represented by the fighters for the freedom of Israel.

Roger Garaudy has painstakingly proved without a shadow of doubt by relying on indubitable and authenticated documents and on books written by unbiased Jewish historians, that the Zionist leaders had in fact fully collaborated with the Nazis and the fascists even at the height of World War II. Their sole aim and object was not to save the Jews as a whole from the Nazis and consequently from the so-called Holocaust but to build a strong Jewish state. Their scheme consisted of choosing Jews with capital or technicians or military expertise etc. for immigration to Palestine and leaving to their fate and destiny the underdogs or the less advantaged Jews such as the old people, the sick, the handicapped and the penniless who would be a burden on the state of Israel rather than bastions for it.

Pascal B. Karmy

Women candidates for Parliament evaluate their election experience

By Dr. Josi Salem-Pickartz.

MANY WILL remember the hopes they had that in the parliamentary elections of November 1997, more women would be successful than in the previous ones, although some political observers and analysts were not very optimistic from the beginning. Disappointment was widespread when it became clear that none of the 17 women candidates had won a seat in the Lower House of Parliament. Several studies are currently under way to analyse the election results, yet not much effort has so far been put into understanding the interplay of all the factors which made women candidates fail.

Learning from women candidates' experiences is the goal of a participatory research project which is currently conducted in close cooperation between the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Al Kutba Institute for Human Development, the former women candidates and their campaign managers. Between April and June 1998, three 2-day workshops will be held during which the participants will analyse and evaluate the general socio-economic and political context in which the elections took place, specific features of their constituencies which influenced the design and implementation of their election campaign, the strength and weaknesses of their programmes, the support and the obstacles which they experienced during the campaign period, as well as the final voting results. Besides performing a political analysis, which will come up with recommendations how to strengthen women's position on political life, up to the parliamentary elections in 2001, the workshops serve to generate comprehensive information which will later be published in a book. The project also includes expert input and takes into account all available data about the parliamentary elections.

Petra was found a suitable location for the first workshop, which took place on April 22 and 23. This meeting focused on the general, local and personal factors which influenced women's decision to run for Parliament and the preparation of their election campaigns. In general, it was felt that holding the elections during



Four of 1997's women candidates attend a pre-election rally (from right) Laila Faisal, Aysha Razem-Khawaja, Fardous Masri, and Toujan Faisal (photo by Rana Hussein)

an intense — and until now unresolved — public dispute about the election law and its administration, reflected negatively on the seriousness and depth of both the campaigning and election phase.

With minor exceptions, the women candidates had a long personal history as NGO activists in social and community development, and/or were intensely confronted with the needs of their people in their professional work as lawyers, writers, journalists, nurses etc. Relying on the reputation they had built through this work, the women set out to conquer the larger political arena, determined to achieve improvement for the Jordanian people. Very few women were affiliated with political parties.

Each candidate was aware that she was pioneering. All women found strong support from their husbands and immediate families, who, in most cases, became intensively involved in the election campaign through their personal and material contributions. However, their tribes all refused to promote them. Some candidates received limited financial support from a special fund of the Jordanian National Committee for Women or contributions from individual donors, yet most could only fall back on their own family's money.

The financial expenses of the women's election campaigns differed

greatly from less than JD3,000 to JD45,000. The logistical backup of the campaigns also varied considerably from a fully equipped office with secretaries to a typewriter and a handful of volunteers.

In designing the content of their campaigns, the candidates used a variety of approaches, like studying the specific needs of their constituencies and trying to respond to the attitudes and expectations of their people, emphasising primarily on tribal issues, or standing up for universal political values.

This first workshop was a good exercise in practical democracy. As the women candidates came from very different cultural, educational and political backgrounds, tolerance towards different values and opinions was a must in order to make the workshop a success. With time, an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation developed, and all participants insisted on having every woman speak on every subject. Therefore, the two work days were rather long; however, at the end of the second day everybody left with inspiration and a sense of having learnt much from each other.

The writer is a founder of Al Kutba Institute for Human Development. She contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

BritishBank Foundation Scholarship



The BritishBank Foundation is pleased to offer one scholarship for MA studies in Heritage Management at the Ironbridge Institute, University of Birmingham, during the 1998-99 academic year.

The Heritage Management course at the Ironbridge Institute starts on 29 September 1998 and is designed to train professionals with the skills required to identify a heritage resource, ensure that it is cared for, made accessible, and passed on to future generations. It is designed for people working in, or planning to work in, museums, historic properties or cultural landscapes.

The BritishBank Foundation is looking for a scholar with a record of excellence, either professional or academic, who will use his/her studies in the UK in the application of their work in Jordan. Priority is given to candidates with excellent command of English working in archaeology, planning, tourism or architecture. Candidates should, preferably, be under the age of 40.

Application forms along with detailed information on the scholarship, the Heritage Studies course at the Ironbridge Institute, as well as on completing the form can be collected from Manager Personal Banking, BritishBank, Jabal Hussein branch or the British Council, Jabal Amman, during the period 28 April - 11 May 1998. The deadline for receiving completed applications is 17 May 1998.

Any submitted documents cannot be reclaimed and must therefore be a photocopy and not an original.

Short listed candidates will be invited for an interview and the successful candidate advised by 10 June 1998.

BritishBank Foundation, Amman

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Jordan Steel generates JD1.37m net profit after boosting sales to JD14.15m

**** JORDAN STEEL** Company is distributing JD1.05 to shareholders following the approval of the general assembly to grant them a seven per cent return on their investment. The cash dividend was proposed by the board of directors as a result of posting a JD1.37 million net profit last year compared to only JD338,000 in 1996. By taking into consideration JD889,000 of retained earnings, the net profit before allocation stood at JD2.26 million (JD1.76 million in 1996).

During 1997, which marked the end of experimental production and the start of commercial operation, the company boosted sales by JD10.11 million to JD14.15 million after deducting the sales tax. Board chairman Mudar Badran told the shareholders that sales during the first three months of this year have reached 14,000 tonnes. He described the volume as good compared to 56,000 tonnes of sales for the whole of 1997.

Mr. Badran said the company intensified its commercial and marketing activities in 1997 by contracting as many merchants, contractors and consultants as possible to familiarise them with the technical specifications and high quality of the reinforced steel that Jordan Steel produces. "Such a step has helped us increase our sales and give the company a larger share of the local market," he emphasised.

The chairman told the general assembly that negotiations were taking place with other steel companies in the Kingdom to specify a quota for what each firm can sell in the local market in accordance with the volume of production and capital invested. Noting that small companies were facing closure, he expected an understanding to be reached soon between the firms to enable each of them to obtain a specific quota to sell its products in the local market.

Mr. Badran put great emphasis on the Iraqi and Palestinian markets for the company's exports as part of the firm's drive to open outside markets in Arab countries. He said Jordan Steel is continuing contacts with the Ministry of Industry and Trade to facilitate the entry of its products to the Palestinian markets after a recent stoppage due to Israeli hindrances. The chairman also highlighted the importance of the Iraqi market describing it as "strategic".

The annual report showed that the company's fixed assets totalled JD18 million at the end of last year and that the receivables have risen from JD0.45 million in 1996 to JD1.39 million in 1997 (AI Ra'i + Al Dustour + Al Aswaq).

Jordan seen needing thousands of trained professionals in hotel business next year

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With the number of hotels sprouting all over the Kingdom, experts believe that by next year Jordan will need a minimum of 8,000 trained professionals to serve an estimated 5,000 new hotel rooms.

More than ever now, experts see Jordan needing institutes to train personnel in hotel work, tour guidance, and tourism in general.

In this regard, the Jordan Hospitality and Tourism Education Company (JHTEC) has been working hard over the past two years on renovating the Amoun College for Hospitality and Tourism Education and its adjoining hotel.

After spending JD 1.5 million on renovations on both the hotel and college, the JHTEC hopes that facilities will be in full function

by June and September respectively to turn the hotel into one of a four-star standard and fully staffed by college trainees.

"The main intention was to lease the facilities of the Amoun College for Hospitality and Tourism Education to upgrade facilities, promote the standard of education, and to serve the new hotels coming up in the country," said JHTEC President Michel Nazzal.

Plans are underway for a duty-free shop to be housed within the hotel's commercial and administrative sections. "JHTEC and the Jordan Duty Free Shops Company agreed on this venture. It will be open to tourists and diplomats," said JHTEC General Manager Mu'taz Saudi.

For the time being, there are 32 students taking courses in this semester's Food Production and Service course. The college offers diplomas cover-

ing four semesters of training in kitchen education, service and sales, front office and house-keeping, and in administration. Short term courses are also offered in the same fields and for a period of three months.

"These short courses are to provide the market with the general requirements for all the new hotels coming up," Mr. Nazzal told the Jordan Times.

The college also offers training in tour guidance, hotel work and tourism in general. Enrolment is open to non-Jordanians as well. In September the College is expected to take in 300 students, some of which are from Saudi Arabia and other neighbouring countries.

Prior to being accepted for the diploma degree, students have to pass a "human behaviour" interview.

"Training in hotel work

means learning all aspects of the trade. In this business, a person works all the way up to the top, and so, the person must be ready to dust floors, clean plates, and entertain guests," Mr. Saudi told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Nazzal admitted to having had a problem with finding trainers but a French team will be coming to take over such a task in addition to professionals from Egypt and Lebanon.

Mr. Nazzal, who is also the president of the Jordan Hotel Association, said that the French government has allocated half a million Jordanian dinars in kind contribution to activate this project.

For the past four years, a group of French consultants have been working on revamping the college and they have proposed plans involving the private sector.

A French-Jordanian financial protocol will pro-

vide finance for the purchase of kitchen equipment for the school.

"This amount will be used to refurbish and upgrade the main kitchen which had been built according to French specifications and designs," said Mr. Saudi.

Among the various other facilities is the "Diplomat Room" which offers training in protocol to foreign ministry employees going to work abroad.

Female diplomats residing in the Kingdom are also offered the facilities of this room as an introduction to Jordan's traditional foods.

JHTEC, a non-profit organisation, took over the administration of the Amoun college and hotel two years ago. Capitalised at JD1 million, the government owns half of the company's shares and the remaining 50 per cent is owned by 17 private sector hotel companies.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Prices as at 2/05/98 19:31

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7925	0.6010	1.4810	133.30	1.4310	1765.10	2.0178	5.9919
DE Mark	0.5579	-	0.3350	0.8318	74.35	0.7981	984.44	1.1258	3.3423
GB Sterling	1.6640	2.9835	-	2.4810	221.86	2.3812	2937.13	3.3576	9.9705
CH Franc	0.6707	120.14	0.4025	-	89.36	0.9591	1183.04	135.24	4.0180
JP Yen	0.0075	1.3442	0.4804	1.1181	-	1.0731	13.24	151.32	4.4934
CA Dollar	0.6888	1.2918	0.4225	1.0566	1.07	-	1270.80	1.4551	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0153	0.3402	0.0845	1325.91	0.8105	-	11.43	3.3938
NL Guilder	0.4856	88.79	0.2975	73.88	68.01	0.7088	874.33	-	2.9681
FR Franc	0.1669	0.2991	0.1002	24.8794	22.22	0.2388	33.67	33.6700	-

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7503	0.3770	3.6398	0.3050	3.6727	1515.25	3.3890
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2896	0.5317	6.1337	0.4301	5.1801	2137.17	4.7800
Saudi Riyal	0.2688	0.1891	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0813	0.98	404.03	0.9037
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8806	9.9477	-	9.65	0.8089	8.74	4019.23	8.9894
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0638	1.01	416.30	0.9311
Kuwait Dinar	3.2792	2.3250	12.2981	1.2363	11.94	-	12.04	4968.85	0.9311
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0211	1.0225	0.9910	0.0830	-	412.57	0.9228
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4679	2.4750	0.2488	2.4021	0.2013	2.4238	-	2.2366
Egyptian	0.2951	0.2092	1.1066	0.1112	1.0740	0.0900	1.0837	447.11	-

Energy

Oils	Last	revised
Brant	14.67	13.88
W. Texas	16.21	15.52
Bonny	14.87	13.88
Dubai	12.90	12.46
UL Gas	158.00	166.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4781	0.16024	0.39784	38.5568
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.48819	0.16363	0.40524	38.3082
KW Dinar	3.2792	5.87889	1.57083	4.89237	437.264
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.75511	1.59413	3.95726	353.732
CY Pound	1.8956	3.3979	1.1385	2.8263	252.654

Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	302.45	302.85
Silver (oz's)	8.13	6.16
Platinum (oz's)	393.5	395.6
AL (3 Months)	1435	1438
CU (3 Months)	1870	1874
Zinc (3 Months)	1108	1112
Lead (3 Months)	589	591
NI (3 Months)	5600	5620

Libor Fixing

Period	-1-	-3-	-6-	-1-
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.6641	5.7422	5.8359	5.9609
GBP	7.3802	7.4427	7.4427	7.3958
JPY	0.6354	0.6979	0.7292	0.7500
DEM	3.6875	3.8229	3.9271	4.1146
FRF	3.5449	1.6978	1.8228	2.0104
CHF	1.5729	3.6563	3.7589	3.9883
ITL	5.4190	5.1410	4.8310	-

Energy

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	197	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1912	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	282.2	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	91	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	28.44	Spot
Tea (sts/kg)	140	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	410	Spot

JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1781	1.184
DE Mark	0.3941	0.3961
CH Franc	0.4736	0.478
FR Franc	0.1178	0.1182
JP Yen	0.5348	0.5375
NL Guilder	0.3504	0.3522
IT Lira	0.399	0.401

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Business urges OECD to adopt minimum standards for management

PARIS (AFP) — The business sector has urged industrial countries to adopt minimum international standards to ensure companies publish full information about their financial positions in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.

"The current crisis in East Asian economies is generating considerable discussion about failed corporate governance practices relating to lending and borrowing," the OECD's Business Sector Advisory Group (BSAG) said in a report on corporate governance.

The Asian crisis "provides a stark example" of what happens when companies are found to have invested heavily at high risk in such a situation without fully informing investors of their

position — the investors stop investing, the report said.

The problem is particularly worrying because investors increasingly rely on the companies they invest in to take action themselves to establish a structure which will "provide actual accountability and responsibility to investors and lenders."

The BSAG was set up by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1996 to advise the organisation on improving the way companies' operations are organised and monitored. It comprises corporate experts and businessmen from the industrialised countries.

The report urged the OECD's 29-member countries to draw up minimum international standards of

corporate governance, "designed to promote fairness, transparency, accountability and responsibility."

It also recommended a voluntary code of "best practices designed to improve the board's ability to be responsible and accountable to shareholders."

In addition, it said, the OECD should establish common principles for companies' disclosure of information about their financial

performance, ownership structure and corporate governance system, ensuring that such information is "clear, consistent and comparable" from one company or country to another.

But it warned that government regulations, which are by their nature a "powerful and potentially rigid tool" should set a minimum framework, and not hem in companies to the point where they are unable to

adapt rapidly to a competitive global marketplace.

"The design of corporate governance relationships and practices should be left to market forces," the report said, while the role of outside regulation is to establish an environment "that allows competition and market forces to work so that corporations can succeed in generating long-term economic gain."

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Utah shoot down Rockets to stay alive in playoffs

HOUSTON (AFP) — The Utah Jazz kept alive their hopes of reaching the National Basketball Association finals for a second straight year Friday with a 93-71 victory over the Houston Rockets.

Karl Malone collected 29 points as the Jazz forced the Rockets into one of their worst playoff efforts. They also forced a fifth game in Salt Lake City to decide the best-of-five Western Conference first-round series, now tied at two games each.

One loss from elimination, the Jazz overcame a slow start with superb defense and a tremendous job by their bench. The Jazz held the Rockets without a basket for nearly nine minutes and the reserves accounted for all but five points as the Jazz outscored the Rockets 20-4 in the fourth quarter.

Bryon Russell and Shandon Anderson added 15 points apiece for top-seeded Utah, which finally made Houston look old.

The Jazz are 37-6 at the Delta Center, including a loss in the best-of-five series opener.

Hakeem Olajuwon again led the Rockets with 27 points but got no help. Despite getting off to a quick start, Houston set a franchise playoff record for fewest points in a half, managing just 29 after intermission, and tied the club playoff low for points in a game.

In the Eastern Conference, the Charlotte Hornets earned a shot at five-time champions Chicago with a 91-82 victory over the Atlanta Hawks.

Anthony Mason had play-off career highs of 29 points and 14 rebounds for Charlotte, leading a fourth quarter surge with 13 points.

Glen Rice scored 10 of his 26 points in the third quarter, when the Hornets climbed back into the game.

"We have such great talent that different people step up every night," Mason said. "Tonight just happened to be my night."

Charlotte acquired Mason and Rice for former Hornets Larry Johnson and Alonzo Mourning, two players who disgraced themselves with other teams on Thursday.

Johnson, of New York, and Miami's Mourning, threw punches at each other Thursday with just one second left in New York's Game Four victory at Madison Square Garden.

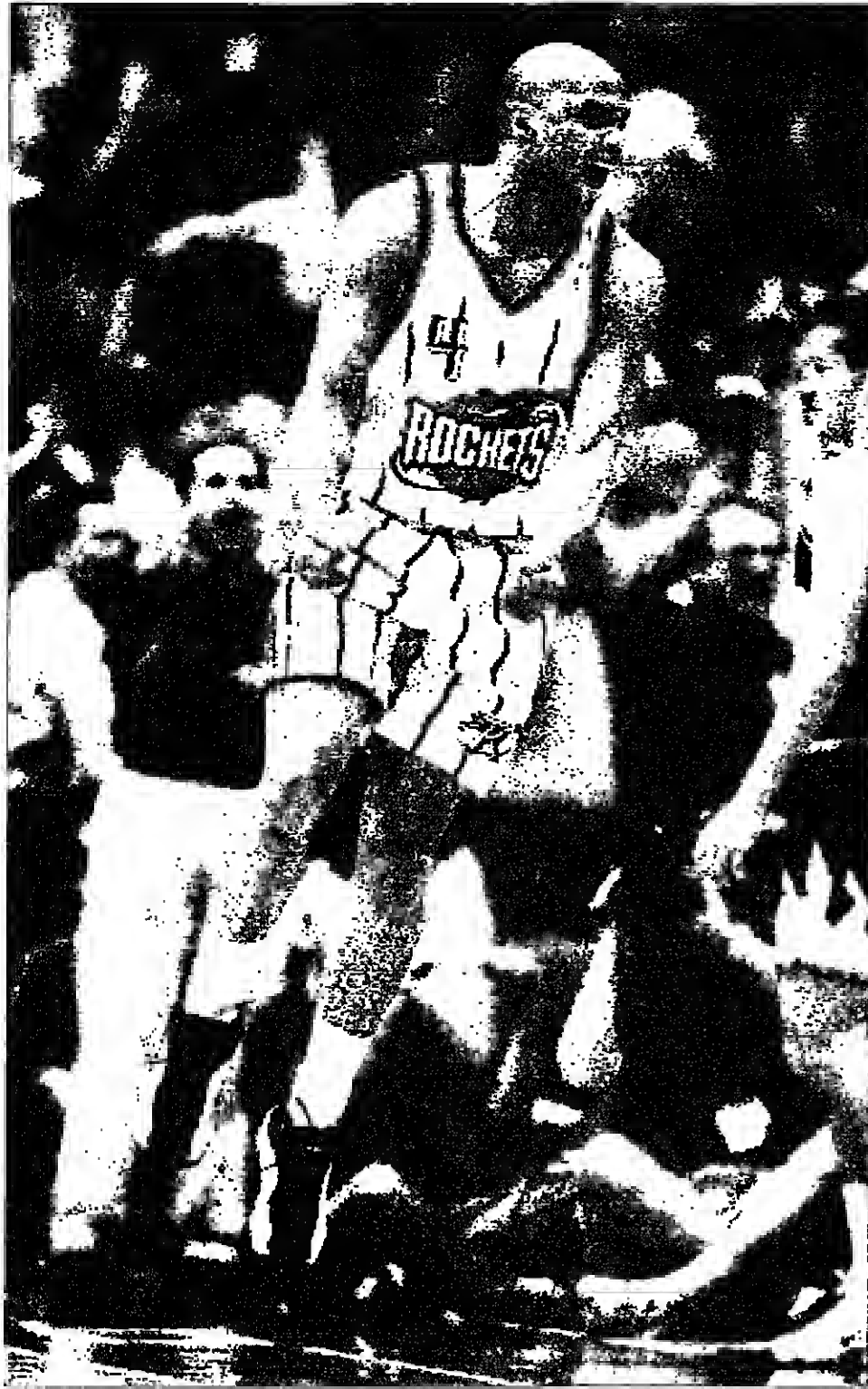
On Friday, the NBA suspended Johnson and Mourning two games each for the fight, so that both will miss the crucial Game Five and one will miss the first game of the conference semi-finals.

Mason and Rice, meanwhile, advance to face the two-time defending champion Bulls.

"We've definitely got to play our A game in Chicago," Mason said. "It's a team that wears it on their chests, night in and night out. They are the champs. You have to play your best ball against them."

"It's gonna be a tough one," Rice said. "We need to play our best basketball to beat them. They are a championship team. We just have to be on top of our game. It's definitely going to be a challenge but we are looking forward to it."

Friday's game was tied



Houston Rockets Charles Barkley leaps into the air after getting a steal and two points past Utah Jazz Jeff Hornacek during the first quarter of their NBA play-off game. The Rockets lead the best of five series 2-1 (Reuters photo)



Charlotte Hornets Glen Rice (R) runs after stealing the ball from the Atlanta Hawks Steve Smith in first quarter action in Atlanta. The Hornets won the best of five series, beating the Hawks 91-82 to advance to the second round of playoffs (Reuters photo)

six times in the fourth quarter, the last time at 74-4 on a pair of free throws by Atlanta's Christian Laettner with 6:45 remaining. Then Hornets coach Dave Cowens said, "Mase was awesome."

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Cameroon's star striker leaves for France

OSAKA, Japan (AFP) — Cameroon's star striker Patrick Mboma left Osaka for Paris on Saturday to get his injured right thigh treated and join his national team's training camp in France before the World Cup finals. "It's not a serious injury, but Mboma is very careful about it, because he suffered the same injury several years ago and it took him three months to recover," said Gamba Osaka spokeswoman Saturday. She said Mboma hurt his right thigh when he scored a hat-trick on April 18 after not playing a game or practicing for two weeks. Mboma, the 27-year-old forward who joined Gamba Osaka in 1997 from Paris St. Germain, is going to see his doctor before training with his national side. He is expected to return to Japan after the World Cup finals.

De Bruin stays silent on doping row

PARIS (AFP) — Irish triple Olympic champion Michelle de Bruin shrugged off doping allegations Friday to win a 100 metres freestyle heat at a club meeting — but refused to comment on the controversy surrounding her. De Bruin, 28, competing under her maiden name Smith at Sarcelles near Paris, battled past a scrum of photographers and was escorted from the pool by race officials after winning her heat in 57.67 seconds. She did not wait to compete in the semi-final or final, but was slated to appear Saturday in the 800m freestyle. On Thursday, International Olympic Committee officials said a recent urine sample from De Bruin contained enough alcohol to be fatal, and IOC Medical Commission head Prince Alexandre De Merode said the high level appeared to indicate manipulation. De Bruin has strenuously denied tampering with a sample given on January 8 in the Netherlands. She is now under investigation by world swimming's governing body, FINA, and could be banned for life if found guilty of doping. De Merode said alcohol could be used to mask the presence of other drugs in a sample.

Kosovo calls for Yugo World Cup ban

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) — Yugoslavia was kicked out of the last World Cup because of the wars in Croatia and Bosnia. Now the Kosovo Albanians want it banned from this summer's championship too. Protesting a Serbian police crackdown, the leader of the Kosovo Albanians demanded that the Yugoslav soccer team be banned from the World Cup in France. Ibrahim Rugova appealed on the world soccer body, FIFA, and the Olympic Committee to impose sanctions against Serb-led teams and sportsmen, saying they have never in the past eight years raised a voice against the Serbian crackdown in Kosovo. More than 150 people have died in Kosovo since March, when Serbian police and military intervened against ethnic Albanian militants waging an armed struggle for the province's independence. In France, Yugoslavia is slated to play the United States, Germany and Iran in Group F preliminary matches. Yugoslavia and Germany are generally favoured to proceed to the next round.

Juninho makes comeback

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Don't count me out! Still hopeful he can make it to the World Cup, Brazilian forward Juninho hopes to make his comeback appearance this Sunday for Atletico de Madrid three months after he suffered a serious left-leg injury. "I feel very well and I am ready to play on Sunday," newspapers quoted the 25-year-old as saying. "I am not afraid and I feel the same as I did before the injury." The leading Spanish sports daily Marca said a special envoy from Brazil was expected at the game to assess the player's recovery and his chances of being fit for France. Juninho was struck down in a tackle on Feb. 1 in Atletico de Madrid's league game against Celta.

Berkamp player of the year

LONDON (AP) — A second title for Dennis Bergkamp as Arsenal guns for the double. Bergkamp Friday has become

the fourth overseas player in a row to win English soccer's Player of the Year award. Though sidelined for what should be Arsenal's final push for the Premier League title, the Dutch forward succeeds Tottenham's Juergen Klinsmann, Manchester United's Eric Cantona and Gianfranco Zola of Chelsea as winners of the award in the last three seasons. Bergkamp, who misses Arsenal's last three league games through injury but hopes to be fit for the May 16 FA Cup final against Newcastle, also won the annual players' award from the Professional Footballers Association two months ago. Arsenal captain Tony Adams placed second in Friday's voting by the Football Writers Association and Liverpool's 18-year-old striker Michael Owen was third.

U.S. team to be announced

CHICAGO (AP) — U.S. coach Steve Sampson will announce his roster selections for the 1998 World Cup team in a nationally televised segment of ESPN's SportsCenter news show on Tuesday. Originally, Sampson had planned to name only about dozen or so definite members of the team prior to his training camp scheduled to start May 11 in San Diego. The United States has three friendlies scheduled in May before it departs for France on June 4. Sampson will name his roster and alternates on the 6:30 p.m. (EDT) (2230 GMT) SportsCenter, the sports cable channel's news and highlights show. The U.S. Soccer Federation also announced he will address the American media on a conference call two hours before the announcement.

Carlos may join Man. United

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Roberto Carlos for Manchester United? The English soccer giant, expected to lose its Premier League title to Arsenal this weekend, is prepared to pay a massive \$85 million as a down payment to buy Brazil's bullet-foot defender Roberto Carlos from Real Madrid. "Manchester United has told us it is willing to pay the waiver clause price to end (the player's) contract and that it will get in contact with Real after May 20," Oliveira Junior, one of the defender's agents told the El Mundo newspaper. "Roberto Carlos wants to stay in Madrid and right now he is concentrating on winning the (European) Champions League, but after the final we'll have to talk." Oliveira told the paper. At 25, Roberto Carlos is ranked as one of the best left wing defenders in the world. He is also known to have one of the fastest shots in the game. Real Madrid, which plays Juventus in the European cup final on May 20, signed Roberto Carlos in 1996. Last June his contract was renewed and he is technically tied to the Spanish club until 2002. The player's waiver clause is set at 14.6 billion pesetas (\$97 million) pesetas but only 12.7 billion pesetas (\$85 million) would have to be paid to the club, El Mundo said.

Mexicans train in Italy

FLORENCE (AP) — Mexico's national team is slated to arrive at the Coviciano training site Saturday to begin final preparations ahead of the World Cup. Mexico has four tournament games planned in Italy, though none are against fellow France '98 qualifiers. Coach Tito De la Fuente's side will face Serie A club Bologna May 7, Estonia May 9, second-division Venezia May 13 and Romania's Steaua Bucharest May 16. Italy trained at Coviciano ahead of several of its matches during World Cup qualifying.

Italy weighs chances

MILAN (AP) — If the Italian team struggles in the early rounds of the World Cup, history indicates they could be headed back to the final. In 1982 and 1994, Italy barely got through the first round and had to score late and then go into extra time to beat Nigeria in the second round before playing its way into the championship match at the Rose Bowl. It placed third in 1990 at home. Italy already has struggled this year and barely qualified for the World Cup, edging Russia 2-1 on aggregate in a two-leg playoff.

Hackett goes under 15 minutes in winning 1500m

MELBOURNE (AFP) — World champion Grant Hackett went under the 15-minute barrier for the second time in an emphatic victory over Daniel Kowalski and Kieren Perkins to win the 1500 metre freestyle at Australia's Commonwealth Games swimming trials here Saturday.

Hackett, 17, hit the wall in 14 minutes 56.23 seconds to beat world champion bronze medalist Kowalski by more than 10 seconds.

World record holder Perkins, needing a placing to ensure selection in Australia's team for September's Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games, was third in 15:12.23.

Earlier, world and Olympic butterfly champion Susie O'Neill eclipsed a long-standing national record with victory in the 200m butterfly for her 30th national title overtaking the previous highest number by Frank Beaurepaire.

Hackett's winning time was just 4.53s off the time he swam almost four months ago to beat European champion Emiliano Brembilla to win the 1500m gold medal at the world championships in Perth.

The giant teenager's effort here would have beaten gold medalist Perkins at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and is all the more impressive considering Hackett's training program has been interrupted because of sinus surgery.

Hackett swam stroke for stroke with

Kowalski, the Atlanta Olympic silver medalist in the event, until the 1000m mark Saturday and then surged away over the final 500m or 10 laps.

Perkins clocked 15:12.23 to be about half a minute outside his world record (14:41.66) set at the 1994 Victoria Commonwealth Games in Canada but it was enough to win him a place in his first major Australian team since Atlanta almost two years ago.

"I'm happy, I was only a body length behind for the first 1000m which was encouraging but I've still got a lot of work to do," said Perkins.

Perkins said making the team would be the spark he needed to get his swimming career back on track.

"I feel that will be the turnaround for me," he said.

"It will give me the opportunity to train with Grant and Daniel and Ian Thorpe.

"To be in that team environment again... makes a real difference with your motivation."

With another four months of training, hopefully I can improve my time by another 20 seconds."

Hackett sounded an ominous warning to his rivals after the race, his second career sub-15 minute swim.

"I haven't had the ideal preparation," he said.

"But there's nothing that's going to stop

me between here and the Commonwealth Games."

"I'm not at my peak fitness yet. I didn't give it my all tonight."

O'Neill burst into tears as she stood atop the victory dais following her butterfly triumph as Australia's most prolific national swimming champion to a standing ovation Saturday.

The 24-year-old easily won her seventh straight Australian 200m butterfly final here to collect her 30th national open title and emerge from the shadow of swimming legend Beaurepaire, who notched 29 wins between 1908 and 1924.

"I've never burst into tears on the victory dais before," said O'Neill, who has collected gold medals at every level in international swimming.

"The closest I've ever probably come before was at the world championships in Perth."

"To break Beaurepaire's record means a lot of me. It's... up there with winning the Olympics. It's nice to create history."

O'Neill easily qualified for her third Commonwealth Games during the titles this week with victories in the 100m and 200m freestyle and butterfly doubles.

She also won silver in the 400m freestyle, meaning she could contest up to eight events in Kuala Lumpur, including all three women's relays.

Agassi easily

MUNICH, Germany (AFP) — Andre Agassi easily overcame a stiffened opponent Friday as a champion in the BMW Open tennis tournament, defeating his opponent in the final.

Despite the long interruption after his loss in the second round, Agassi gathered his nerves quickly and completed the match in 68 minutes.

It's very un-courteous when you're playing and hear the crowd cheering, but if you're a bad player, you're not going to be there for long.

Agassi said he was happy to be back in the tournament and to be playing in front of his home crowd.

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Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 9:00	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:00, 3:00, 7:00, 10:30 p.m.	Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30			Starring Hisham Yanes, Amal Dabbas, Rania Kurdi and the group

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Agassi easily advances to semis

MUNICH, Germany (AFP) — Andre Agassi jokingly cowered behind a startled linesman Friday as a thunderclap momentarily interrupted his BMW Open quarter-final against Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman.

Despite the loud interruption after 1-0 in the second set to the American eighth seed, Agassi gathered his wits quickly and completed a 6-2, 6-2 march into the semifinals on clay in 58 minutes.

"It's very unsettling when you're playing and hear that," said Agassi, who ended his third career victory over Bjorkman in a drizzle.

"It's important not to rush and speed yourself up. I was up a set and a break, but if I'd played a bad game there, I'm seconds away from the match being even. You've got to keep things nice and the same tempo."

Agassi got a response from the linesman — but not anything that the Las Vegas right-hander could understand.

"He said something in German — probably 'don't touch me, get away!'"

The 20th-ranked Agassi has now reached his fifth semifinal in seven tournaments as his miracle comeback from No. 141 last autumn continues at full throttle.

The eighth seed next faces Spaniard Galo Blanco, who spent two hours, 32 minutes in defeating Sweden's Thomas



Jonas Bjorkman

Nydhall 7-5, 5-7, 7-6 (7/1) in sunny conditions.

Despite the poor weather, officials were hoping to stage the concluding quarter-finals late Friday.

Of the four Swedes who started the day Magnus Gustafsson (playing Australian Open semifinalist Nicolas Escude of France) and seventh seed Thomas Enqvist (against German Oliver Gross) were still in contention for the semis.

Matches will be held Saturday morning with the semi-finals set for the afternoon, tournament officials said.

Agassi proved that his clay court form is no fluke with his victory over world No. 7 Bjorkman.

"I step on the court now and I want to win every match," said the 28-year-old world No. 20, who was given a suit of Bavarian clothing by the tournament for his Wednesday birthday.

"It's nice to play someone in the Top Ten because you can judge your game. Jonas has been playing well this week. For me to get the win in the fashion that I did gives me a lot of confidence."

Agassi added: "More importantly, I move on to the next round — that's what I need."

The American meanwhile turned down a wild card entry for next week's German Open in Hamburg. Agassi said that the heavy surface there would not suit him right now.

"For me to play well on slow clay wouldn't mean much. It's very different than Paris. I'm trying to prepare for the French Open."

"Hamburg didn't really fit my plans, that's what I felt as it got closer."

Seventh seed Thomas Enqvist and evergreen 31-year-old Magnus Gustafsson saved face for Sweden after the defeats of Nydhall and Bjorkman.

Enqvist, 21st in the world and never particularly at home on clay, dismissed the final German contender, Oliver Gross, 6-3, 6-3 in the chilly conditions of late afternoon.

Gustafsson, who has already won a title this year at Copenhagen, advanced into a match-up with his compatriot as he ousted Frenchman Nicolas Escude 6-3, 6-1.

Enqvist has the edge in the pair's career confrontation, winning four while losing only two.

Jazireh request Prince Abdullah to resolve Premier League deadlock

Hamdan: suspending the championship was best solution until compromise is reached

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Jazireh Club Saturday urged His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, president of the Jordan Football Association (JFA), to interfere to resolve the deadlock over the suspension of the Premier League (PL) Championship.

The JFA's decision to suspend the PL matches followed a similar one by seven of the ten competing clubs on Thursday over their demand to reallocate the revenues from ticket sales.

Also Saturday, JFA spokesman Mohammad Hamdan confirmed that a meeting will take place on May 11 to discuss the deadlock over the issue.

The JFA secretary told the Jordan Times that a committee was formed to try to overcome the logjam over the distribution of

ticket sales. He added that the committee will submit a report to the JFA executive board within two weeks.

"Suspending the PL Championship was the best solution we could have to avoid a confrontation with the seven clubs," Mr. Hamdan said. "We will meet with representatives of the ten clubs to reach a compromise that would satisfy all parties."

The seven clubs are demanding an equal distribution of the revenue among the ten clubs irrespective of the number of fans attending each club's matches.

Two clubs, Al Wihdat and Shabab Al Hussein, declined to support this demand and hinted that any change of the present formula that governs the distribution of the revenues would prompt a "reconsideration" of their stand of competing in the

PL championship.

Abdullah Kiswani, president of Al Jazireh Club which did not support any of the two stands, told a press conference that a meeting between the JFA and representatives of the ten clubs was necessary to solve the logjam over the issue.

"The question is not the distribution of revenue rather than other internal problems among these clubs which prompted the suspension of the PL Championship," Mr. Kiswani told reporters.

"We believe that a meeting between the JFA and the ten clubs is a must to resolve the problem," Mr. Kiswani added.

"Some concession has to be made by the clubs over the issue if such a meeting took place," Al Jazireh spokesman said.

"We are not supporting any of two camps. We are for a formula that gains the

consensus of all clubs," Mr. Kiswani noted.

He blamed the JFA's officials of "ignoring" some of the PL clubs and resorting to decisions without any consultation with the ten clubs.

Mr. Kiswani accused the JFA of "discriminating" among the ten clubs where "consideration to interests of some clubs comes at the expense of others." He did not elaborate.

Mr. Kiswani also criticised the JFA's decision-making mechanism, the registration of players, formation of JFA's committees and other issues.

He added that a recent agreement between the JFA and four businessmen to market and sell PL matches in return for a JD300,000 should have been made after a "thorough" consultation with the concerned parties.



Boston Red Sox left fielder Troy O'Leary (L) and centerfielder Darren Lewis (R) chase and lose Texas Rangers batter Will Clark's fly to left center field, allowing Texas baserunners Juan Gonzalez and Mark McLemore to score in third inning action at Boston's Fenway Park (Reuters photo)

SCOREBOARD

National Hockey League

First round playoffs (series best-of-seven).

Eastern Conference Quarterfinals

Buffalo 3 Philadelphia 2

(Buffalo wins series, 4-1)

Montreal 5 Pittsburgh 2

(Montreal leads series, 3-2)

Boston 4 Washington 0

(Boston leads series, 3-2)

National League

Chicago Cubs 6 St Louis 5

Florida 6 San Diego 5 (11 Innings)

Montreal 7 Arizona 4

Houston 12 Philadelphia 5

Pittsburgh 5 Los Angeles 4

Atlanta 6 San Francisco 2

Milwaukee 5 Cincinnati 2

Colorado at NY Mets — Postponed

American League

Baltimore 6 Minnesota 3

Boston 5 Texas 3

Cleveland 7 Tampa Bay 5

NY Yankees 2 Kansas City 1

Anaheim 7 Chi White Sox 1

Oakland 5 Toronto 2

Detroit 17 Seattle 3

National Basketball Association

Playoffs first round (all series best-of-five)

Eastern Conference

Charlotte 91 Atlanta 82

(Charlotte win series 3-1)

Western Conference

Utah 93 Houston 71

(Series tied 2-2)

Hingis sweeps Capriati away

HAMBURG (AFP) — Martina Hingis interrupted Jennifer Capriati's latest comeback with a decisive 6-1, 6-3 win in the quarter-finals of the Internazionali d'Italia Grand Prix, while in-form Patty Schnyder upset three-time former champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario 6-3, 6-0.

Hingis now faces Austria's Barbara Schett, who stunned Virginia Ruano-Pascual of Spain 6-0, 6-0. Switzerland's Schnyder next tackles second seed Jana Novotna after the Czech eased her way to a 6-1, 6-3 victory over German qualifier Julia Abe.

Capriati's game never caught fire against Hingis, whom she took to three close sets when they played in the Sydney final 16 months ago.

Instead the main source of entertainment came from the new folding roof with, with the court bathed in brilliant sunshine, rain caught in the roof from earlier in the week began to cascade on in the court and a number of surprised box seat holders.

With Hingis leading 5-2 in the second set, play was suspended for 37 minutes as the roof was closed and reopened in an only partially successful attempt at solving the problem.

"That was definitely a first," said Capriati. "I guess they need to do a better job on it."

The break gave her a chance to regroup, but the damage had already been done by a very solid performance from Hingis and the American's own inconsistencies.

Still, with a long-term aim of returning to the top 20, the American wasn't too disappointed, and she has accepted a wild card into next week's Italian Open.

"It could be a long way away but it's something I'm prepared to go through," she vowed. "There are a few things I have to work on, but I'm definitely in it. It's just that I haven't played as many matches as my opponents, and that's the only way I can get more confidence and improve my fitness."

Hingis was satisfied with her performance, in which she rallied well and often caught Capriati off guard

with some well-executed dropshots.

"I played very well, very concentrated," said Hingis. "I didn't know what to expect and whether she'd bring any shots from the old times out of her pocket."

Schnyder is one of the most improved players this year with tournament victories in Hobart and Hannover, and she was able to take advantage of a very erratic performance from third seed Sanchez Vicario to repeat an equally emphatic win over her in Rome a year ago.

The Spaniard appeared to have no feeling for the hail at all and committed a succession of unforced errors. Having conceded the first set, she then won only two points in the first three games of the second to leave Schnyder cruising to victory.

Ruano-Pascual, who won the Budapest title last weekend, saw her run come to an abrupt end as she failed to win a game against Barbara Schett.

Sampras manages quarterfinal win

DULUTH, Georgia (AP) — Top seed Pete Sampras travelled down another rocky road in the \$315,000 AT&T Challenge, edging Ramon Delgado of Paraguay 7-6 (8-6), 7-6 (7-2).

"It was definitely a struggle once again," admitted Sampras, who advanced Friday night to his third semifinal of 1998. "It was very cold tonight. Once, I could see my breath. The conditions were very slow and heavy."

The American, ranked No. 1 in the world, began strongly against Delgado, ranked 104th, with two service breaks to go up 4-1. Playing solidly from the baseline, however, the Paraguayan managed to break back in the next game and again at 4-5 to even the set.

Delgado jumped to a 4-1 lead in the tiebreaker. He missed a backhand, however, allowing Sampras to tie it 4-4. Delgado, up again at 6-5, served for the set but Sampras nailed a running forehand passing shot cross-court to save the

point. Serving for the set at 7-6, Sampras then crushed a forehand winner off Delgado's weak return.

Sampras and Delgado held serve after trading early breaks in the second set to force another tiebreaker. Once again a couple of big forehands spelled the difference as Sampras opened a 5-2 lead.

Sampras hit just 48 per cent of his first serves and had seven double faults.

The semifinals features second-seed Jason Stoltenberg of Australia against sixth-seed Andrei Pavel, of Romania, and Sampras against 81st-ranked Alex Calatrava of Spain.

Calatrava advanced to his second career semifinal when Steve Campbell was unable to continue.

Stoltenberg made quick work of ailing American Richey Reneberg 6-4, 6-1.

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The British Council Library & Information Services New Opening Hours

As from 1st May 1998, Library & Information Services opening hours will be as follows: Sunday-Thursday: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Closed on Fridays and Saturdays. For further information please contact us at: Tel. 4636147, 4636148

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HIRSH
GOREN Bridge Made Simple, Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AK Q104 OK 1088 08874 44

Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?

A - Normally, you bid up-the-line when you hold more than one four-card suit. You have a pretty fair hand in support of either major, but there's no reason why you should want to be declarer — you have no tenace position to protect. Make the textbook one diamond response and let partner introduce a major, should he have one.

Q. 2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AA Q2 743 QQ10 AJ 10632

The bidding has proceeded: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

1A 1A 7

What do you bid now?

A - Obviously, the choice lies between raising partner's minor or bidding one no trump. With two sure stoppers in the enemy suit and a probable source of tricks in clubs, a nine-trick contract looks to be your most likely game, if you have one, so bid one no trump.

Q. 3 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AA QJ6 OK10754 0AQ 4A10

What is your opening bid?

A - Since neither your hand nor your suit is good enough for a demand bid of two hearts, you have little choice other than to open one heart. However, we have a sneaky admiration for those who tuck a heart in with the diamonds and bid two no trump — a viable option had both your losing suits been minors.

Q. 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

437632 772 0A762 453

The bidding has proceeded: WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

Pass 1A Pass 7

What action do you take?

A - You do not have much of a hand, but experience shows that it is wrong to pass with a five-card major when you have an ace in your hand. Bid one spade.

Q. 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

410763 0J9342 0A6 AK3

The bidding has proceeded: WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1C Del 1NT 7

What action do you take?


A - You have too much to pass, but what do you bid? Since partner has at least one major, you don't have to guess. Cue-bid two diamonds, and let partner make the choice. If North deals a major, you can bid your hearts. You have enough to compete at the three-level.

Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

4Q10 7576 OKQJ842 4A3

Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?

A - Whether partner is maximum or minimum is not the issue here — it is whether your hand is going to produce six tricks or not. The former is a strong possibility — if partner does not have the ace of diamonds, either diamond length in the North hand or the queen of spades as an entry will suffice. Raise to three no trump.



THE JORDANIAN-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE

The Binational Fulbright Commission (BFC) in Jordan is pleased to announce the scholarship awards competition for Jordanian nationals only, for the 1999-2000 academic year in the United States in the following award categories:

- Graduate Degree (Masters or PhD)
- Post-Doctoral Research or Lecturing
- H.H. Humphrey Professional, non-degree program

Individuals interested in applying for these prestigious awards must meet the basic minimum requirements:

- Superior Academic and/or Professional Achievement
- English Language Proficiency (TOEFL of 575 or better)
- Required Standardized Tests (GRE, GMAT) for the graduate degree application.

Completed applications for each of the grant categories must be submitted to the BFC Fulbright office No Later Than 30 July 1998 (No Exceptions).

For more detailed information on the minimum requirements to compete for each award and to obtain application forms, please visit the "Fulbright House" in Shmeisani at 19 Mahdi Bin Barakah Street. Tel: 568-4760 or Fax: 568-4820.

Saudi Arabia urges U.S. to renew contacts with Iran

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia has urged the United States to renew contacts with Iran during a visit to the kingdom by U.S. Vice President Al Gore, diplomats here said Saturday.

King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah told visiting Mr. Gore that Iran's policies have changed since moderate President Mohammad Khatami came to power in August and encouraged Mr. Gore to set up contacts with Tehran, a Western diplomat said.

The diplomat said that while Saudi Arabia was not mediating between the

United States, it was explaining Iran's positions to the United States.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal plans to discuss the U.S. stance towards Iran during his visit to Tehran this month, the diplomat said.

The United States severed diplomatic relations with Iran in April 1980 after revolutionaries seized 52 hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran during the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Following Mr. Khatami's election last year, the United States has eased its

policy of seeking to isolate Iran and is now seeking to open a dialogue with Tehran.

Mr. Khatami has responded to the U.S. offer by proposing broader contacts between Iranians and Americans to promote understanding between the two countries.

But Iran angrily rejected on Friday a U.S. report branding the Islamic republic the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 1997 and said the allegations would deepen the rift between the two countries.

Yemeni kidnappers of Britons demand direct talks with officials

SANAA (AFP) — Armed tribesmen who kidnapped three Britons more than two weeks ago are demanding direct negotiations with the Yemeni government before they are released, a tribal official said on Saturday.

Kidnappers from the Bani Dahyan tribe want talks with an official with the power to meet their demands, but the Yemeni government is refusing any direct negotiations and is demanding the release of the British family without conditions, the tribal official said.

British teacher David Mitchell, his wife Carolyn and their 14-year-old son Ben were taken hostage on April 16 in an ambush on the road from the southern city of Aden and remain in captivity despite assurances last month from Yemen's president that their release was imminent.

They are being held in the village of Quradh, a mountainous region close to Dhamar, some 160 kilometres southeast of the capital Sanaa. The area has been

surrounded by security forces, the tribal official said.

The Yemeni authorities have refrained from using force to avoid endangering the hostages' lives, the official said, adding that the British family was in good health.

The British government has informed Yemen that it wants the couple and their son freed through peaceful means.

The kidnappers are reportedly seeking government aid for their region.

A British diplomat in Sanaa said: "We aren't sure yet what the kidnappers' demands are, but they appear to want roads, electricity and schools."

The tribal official said the abductors are also demanding that the authorities return a vehicle owned by members of the tribe. The vehicle had been confiscated by police in Sanaa when the tribesmen tried to kidnap a Western diplomat in April.

The Yemeni government has put Sheikh Mohammed

Ben Neji Al Ghader, the chief of the influential tribe of Khawalan, in charge of the negotiations for the Britons' release with the neighbouring Bani Dahyan.

Sheikh Ghader sent two of his representatives to the Bani Dahyan, but the talks failed and they returned to Sanaa Thursday.

Earlier mediation efforts by Sanaa Governor Mohammed Abdallah Al Sufi also proved fruitless.

Mr. Sufi had been instrumental in winning the freedom of Briton Henry Thompson, a charity worker kidnapped in October 1997 by the same tribe.

The Bani Dahyan have abducted several foreigners, a practice that is becoming a common way for tribes to win government concessions.

More than 100 foreigners have been abducted since 1993 by Yemeni tribesmen. The hostages have been used as bargaining chips in disputes with the authorities, but treated as guests and released unharmed.

Two months after Annan deal, U.N. avoids making waves with Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Two months after U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan brokered a deal that averted war between the United States and Iraq, the new U.N. attitude toward the arms inspection conflict seems to be "Don't make waves." Meanwhile, it is the U.N. weapons inspectors — not the Iraqis — who are under siege.

The inspectors are fighting to defend the independence of their mission to determine if Baghdad is still holding banned weapons.

Russia, Iraq's chief

role in the programme, and Russia, France, and China are pushing ahead with a campaign to scale back inspections of Iraq's nuclear research facilities.

The United States is trying to show flexibility on some of these demands in hopes of holding the council together to maintain economic sanctions against Iraq.

The council imposed the sanctions in 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait, triggering the 1991 Persian Gulf war. Council members agreed to maintain the sanctions until U.N. inspectors certify that Iraq has destroyed long-range missiles and

chemical, nuclear and biological weapons.

For years, the council routinely renewed those sanctions with little debate. But last year's crisis over U.N. access to key suspected weapons sites in Iraq changed all that. The council took 10 hours Monday to renew the embargo.

In response, Iraq's two top decision-making bodies, the Revolutionary Command Council and the Baath Party Command, sent an open letter to the Security Council warning of "grave consequences" if it does not lift the sanctions.

Viagra mania: Impotent men rejoice, but questions abound

By David Foster and Daniel Q. Haney
Associated Press

SUN CITY — A retirement community might seem an unlikely hotbed for sexual revolution, but such is the power of a little blue pill. Down palm-lined streets where golf, grandchildren and gallstones are the usual topics of conversation, the new talk of the town is Viagra, a potent new medicine for male impotence.

Some here call it "that sex pill." Harold Dennis, 61, calls it something close to a miracle.

"I've been impotent since 1986. But last night, I felt good." He puts his arm around his wife, Juanita, and flashes a big grin. "It was very satisfactory."

In the three weeks Viagra has been available, drugstores have filled an estimated 150,000 prescriptions. "America, men have action in a way they years — and both men engaged in rimming of the and the playing ice again. She treatments for acun pumps, us and drugs into the penis

or plunged down the urethra — but their disadvantages are obvious.

Viagra is something new: the first pill that makes erections possible. Take the tablet. Wait a half hour. Add a little old-fashioned sexual stimulation. And things begin to happen, perhaps for the first time in a long while.

No wonder doctors can't write prescriptions fast enough. "It's the biggest thing since the Beatles," said Rafael Wurzel of New Britain General Hospital in the northeastern state of Connecticut. He has already made out more than 300 Viagra prescriptions.

"There are about 30 million guys out there" with erectile dysfunction — as impotence is called now by most doctors — "and hardly any will acknowledge the problem and get help," Dr. Wurzel said. "All of a sudden, I see this taboo totally debunked because of Viagra."

Overnight, patients he'd seen for years for kidney stones, prostate woes, bladder tumours, whatever, began calling him to talk about this other little matter they'd never gotten around to mentioning.

Typical of his patients is

Bernard, 58, a retired construction worker who, like many taking the pill, doesn't want to see his name in the newspaper. Cancer and emphysema, plus the side effects of his medicines, have made erections unpredictable for him the past four years, but he's still grinning about the first time he took Viagra.

"I didn't say a word to my partner before," he said. "But afterward, she asked what got into me. This took me back 10 years. It's changed my life. It's given me more self-confidence. I feel good about who I am."

Doctors generally appear to be prescribing the drug for men like Bernard who have clear physical reasons for their impotence. Among the most common causes are diseases that damage the nerves or interfere with blood flow to the penis. These include high blood pressure, diabetes, clogged arteries, multiple sclerosis and reactions to medications.

"It definitely works, but it won't work for everybody," said William Steers, chairman of urology at the University of Virginia Health Science Centre. "I tell patients that the chance of a home run is 50-50."

Among those most interested

in Viagra are men who have had their cancerous prostate glands removed. The operation often snips nerves essential for erections. Many of these men are still vigorous and healthy, and still interested in sex. But only about 25 percent to 40 percent are likely to be helped by Viagra.

Lon, a retired financial planner in Clovis, California, has been impotent since prostate surgery three years ago. The second time he took Viagra, he felt "a slight beginning of an erection, but nothing to get excited about." So he will stick with his inflatable implant, which he says is not as bad as it sounds.

Viagra may not be just for men. Studies are going on to see whether Viagra can rejuvenate women's sex lives, too.

Baltimore hairdresser Laurie Kline took a pill last week and said she had her first orgasm since her hysterectomy five years ago.

"It was like it used to be — maybe even a little bit better," she said.

While specialists are delighted to have something new to offer their patients — and talk-show hosts are rushing to line up guests — some observers

worry about Viagra's effects beyond the mechanics of erection.

What will it do to couples' relationships? What about the curious who want to see if it revs up normal sexual prowess? How much sex should an ageing man expect, anyway? Who will pay for it?

Prizer Inc., which makes Viagra, stresses that it's not quite a sexual fountain of youth. "Viagra restores. It doesn't create," said spokesman Andy McCormick. "A 55-year-old man taking Viagra would report a return of desire consistent with a healthy 55-year-old man, not to the level of a 22-year-old."

Viagra has been tested mostly on men who are clearly impotent, and doctors say there's no reason to believe the drug will do anything for those who get normal erections. But the idea, even without evidence, that this elixir might make erections grow harder, last longer and return sooner clearly intrigues many.

(Cartoon published in Time Magazine)

Don Johnson to wed Kelley Phleger

NEW YORK (AFP) — U.S. television actor Don Johnson, 48, is planning to wed Kelley Phleger, a member of San Francisco's upper crust, later this year.

Johnson reportedly proposed to the dark-haired, 29-year-old school teacher and former debutante and gave her a 5.5-carat diamond ring. It would be the former "Miami Vice" star's fifth trip to the altar. He has had two marriages annulled and has twice married and divorced actress Melanie Griffith.

"They've been seeing each other about six months," Elliott Mintz, Johnson's spokesman said. "They met, they fell in love, they intend to wed."

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CAMBODIANS FLEE TO THAILAND: A truck overloaded with Khmer Rouge refugees enters a United Nations High Commission Centre for Refugees Camp near Huay Samran, 460 kilometres northwest of Bangkok, Saturday. An estimated 20,000 Khmer Rouge and Cambodian refugees have fled across the border to Thailand as heavy fighting between Cambodian army forces and Khmer Rouge soldiers continues (AP Photo)

Iran pledges to continue support for Palestinians

TEHRAN (R) — Iran pledged to continue its support for Palestinians in their struggle against Israeli occupation, Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was quoted as saying on Iranian television on Saturday.

Ayatollah Khamenei made his remarks during a meeting with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder of the Islamist Palestinian Hamas group, which has claimed responsibility for many attacks against Israeli targets in recent years.

"We will continue to fight, and no amount of political, economic, or propaganda pressure, will take us away from the path of support for the Palestinian cause," Ayatollah Khamenei was quoted as telling 61-year-old Sheikh Yassin, who was jailed by Israel for eight years before his release last year.

Since its 1979 Islamic revolution, Iran has called on all Muslims to back the Palestinians against Israel.

Tehran rejects the current Middle East peace process, but says it would do nothing to hinder it.

Iran regularly refers to Israel as "the Zionist regime" or the "Zionist occupiers."

"There is a difference between Judaism and Zionism and the Iranian government will not recognise the occupying Zionist regime even for one hour," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

Television showed the wheelchair-bound Sheikh Yassin smiling as Ayatollah Khamenei spoke.

Sheikh Yassin, who is wrapping a five-day visit to Tehran, also met former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Saturday, the television said.

"We appreciate the support of Iran and we will continue our struggle until we free holy Jerusalem from Israeli occupation," Sheikh Yassin was quoted as saying.

Sheikh Yassin predicts failure of London talks

TEHRAN (AFP) — The spiritual leader and founder of the Palestinian movement Hamas forecast on Saturday the failure of crucial peace talks between Israeli, Palestinian and U.S. leaders next week.

"I don't think this meeting can achieve anything," Sheikh Ahmad Yassin told the Iranian newspaper Jomhuri-Isfahani.

"The United States is not serious in establishing peace in the region because it supports Israel, and Britain is the cause of the tragedy of Palestine," said Sheikh Yassin, who is currently visiting Iran.

He said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was a "right-wing fundamentalist and will lose his position if he makes concessions to the Palestinians."

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is to meet separately with Palestinian President Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu in London on Monday to try to seal a "package deal" drawn up by the United States over issues left over from interim self-rule accords, so the two sides can start negotiations on a final peace settlement.

But Mr. Netanyahu has steadfastly rejected U.S. proposals for an Israeli withdrawal from 13 per cent of the West Bank, the central issue at Monday's talks.

International mediators are anxious to head off growing tension over the arrival later this year of Russian anti-aircraft missiles ordered by the Greek Cypriots.

Cyprus have been separated since Turkish troops invaded in 1974 after a brief Greek-inspired coup. A U.N.-patrolled "green line" buffer zone separates them.

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Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — They are the beautiful people, according to the U.S. magazine People. Which just goes to show that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. Hollywood's latest heart-throb Leonardo DiCaprio, unsurprisingly, was right up there among the world's 50 most beautiful people, the magazine decided. He had to share the beauty stakes with the likes of Prince William, elder son of the late Princess Diana and second in line to the throne, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Also listed were Indian writer Arundhati Roy, tennis star Anna Kournikova, Spanish singer Enrique Iglesias, hall player Alex Rodriguez and singer Erykah Badu.

Mark Addy gets in big demand

LONDON (AFP) — Mark Addy, the rugby loser who bared his all in "The Full Monty," is in big demand these days. Currently filming in Hollywood, he's fast emerging as the most successful of the troupe of actors who, in the hit comedy, portray a group of redundant steelworkers who turn to stripping to make ends meet. Addy got just \$26,000 for that role, a far cry from the three million pounds he's reported to be earning over the next 18 months. He was offered a host of roles after "The Full Monty," eventually plumping for "Frost," a Warner Bros. comedy starring Michael Keaton and Kelly Preston, which he's currently filming.

Rapper arrested for pot possession

UNIVERSAL CITY (AP) — Snoop Doggy Dogg and another rapper were arrested for investigation of marijuana possession at a comedy show, and a crowd of about 60 fans rushed backstage to get a closer look. Calvin Broadus, 26, who goes by the stage name Snoop Doggy Dogg, and fellow rapper Delmar Arnaud were arrested Friday and booked on one count each of misdemeanor marijuana possession, sheriff's Lt. Brad Welker. They were released after receiving a citation to appear in court.

Irving with a lead role

LONDON (AFP) — Amy Irving, the "Carrie" star once known as Mrs. Spielberg, is reviving her career with a lead role in a sequel to the horror classic. After her role 22 years ago in "Carrie," she disappeared from sight somewhat with her marriage to Steven Spielberg. The couple were divorced in 1989 and recently she's been making a comeback, with a small role in Woody Allen's "Deconstructing Harry."

Don Johnson to wed Kelley Phleger

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Hizbollah attacks SLA

RASHAYA (AP) — Hizbollah fighters attacked Israeli military positions in southern Lebanon with mortar and rocket-propelled grenades, Israeli officials said Saturday. The attack by the guerrilla group came just inside Israel's 20-kilometre (12-mile) buffer zone in southern Lebanon. Israel responded shortly after the attack with a series of mortar and rocket fire on the Lebanese town of Marjayoun and Ein El Tineh, which are in the buffer zone. There were no casualties or damage to the buildings, Israeli officials said. The attack came on the anniversary of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

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King: Should

To have an

By Tarek Ayoub

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